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EASTERN EUROPE

AND

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"REVELATIONS OF RUSSIA;" "THE WHITE SLAVE."

VOL. I.

LONDON:
T. C. NEWBY, PUBLISHER,
72, MORTIMER STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE

1846.

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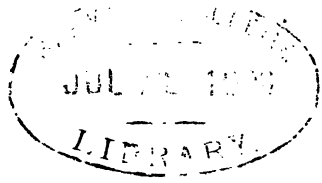

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY G. LILLEY, 148, HOLBORN BARS.

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PREFACE.

THIS book, like the preceding works which the author has offered to the public, treats of the condition and influences of the Russian despotism.

He has little dread of being monotonous, though publishing eight volumes on an identical subject; because it is a theme so vast and varied that a hundred tomes would scarce suffice to make known to the British public all that it should know about an empire covering one half the continent of Europe,—whose action is so marked upon the present destiny, so inextricably interwoven with the future fate of so many neighbouring races.

In the prosecution of this task, to which he trusts to see many and more able pens devoted, truth will oblige him to heap more opprobrium on the Russian government, and its imperial head, than he has done even in former works; but it has now, perhaps, become his turn to warn the public against that Russo-phobia with which his first book was unfairly reproached,—unfairly, because the author has always striven to render justice to the

natural character of the Russian people, stigmatising only the monstrous system which so profoundly demoralises and so cruelly oppresses it, and pointing out the vices engendered by its social and political administration, not with the view of holding up to obloquy a nation, which, in the midst of its long degradation, has retained so many estimable qualities; but to make its government expiate at the bar of public opinion the crying abuse of a responsibility the most extensive ever entailed on any human authority.

On the first exposure of a state of society so incredible, because so unparallelled, it was natural that the public, through the press, its organs, should have received with extreme caution the statements of those who sought to raise the veil in which the Russian government had so artfully enveloped the condition of its empire. But when the startling nature of the facts adduced, by giving rise to investigation, had led to their confirmation, the previous scepticism entertained seems to have given place to a growing contempt of the whole Russian nation, in which the reprobation that ought to mark its rulers has been merged.

Nothing can be more unjust than this confusion of victims and oppressors, though it appears one which too readily results from the disgust experienced on contemplating the guilt and the corruption of the mass into which both are blended.

Out of the few writers who have recently thrown

light upon this mournful but profoundly interesting subject, two,—the Marquis de Custine, and Lacroix,—whilst helping to expose the character of the Russian government, have imbibed a deeply-rooted prejudice against the Russian people, in which the author of these volumes has never shared, and which in the ensuing pages he will strive to dissipate.

The objects which he has in view are threefold.

He proposes in the first place to point out distinctly the frightful nature of the most extensive slavery in the world, and the direct and guilty participation of the Russian cabinet in it; in the second, to show by recent instances, both in Russia and Poland, that the fearful state of things which has been from many sources recently made public, is not a matter of past history, but of present and hourly occurrence; and thirdly, to call its attention to the vast political changes which at no distant day threaten to convulse the whole of eastern Europe.

It is almost impossible that, in the event of any great struggle, we should not directly or indirectly be called on to interfere in many ways impossible to foresee, since our relations with the whole world are now so extended that every distant vibration, like that which moves the extremities of a spider's web, must be felt at the centre.

The policy of our own government must continue to become more directly influenced by public opinion, which it grows therefore daily more needful to enlighten on all questions of political import; so that discussion

having led to due appreciation of truth, the sympathies of the nation may not, when surprised by any unexpected outbreak of events, be led into any false channels, or rendered subservient to the timid or contracted views of statesmen, sacrificing to expediency, or seeking only to avoid personal embarrassment, to the eventual prejudice of the character and interests of their country.

For all who have due opportunities of noting such signs of the times as by their accumulation point to inevitable results, it becomes obvious that a growing spirit of resistance is now animating whole populations which have remained so long in torpid apathy that their distinct existence has become popularly forgotten, or confounded in the artificial states amongst which they have been parcelled out.

A glance at the rough map accompanying this work will remind the reader, that whilst the western half of Europe comprises nearly all its constitutionally governed states, (which lie contiguous to each other, and are established on the broad basis of an homogenity of national population,) all the eastern portion of its continent is divided between four despotisms, whose rule is established over heterogenous races, nearly always subdued by a minority, and ruled over by a system of deceit and terror which has hitherto acted on the jealousies, ignorance, and abasement, which for their own selfish ends these governments still strive to perpetuate amongst more than half the population of the most civilised quarter of the globe.

It will be perceived that the great bulk of this population is Sclavonic, parcelled out between Prussia, Austria, Russia, and Turkey, to the extent of between 85 and 100 millions.

Finns, Magyars, Italians, Greeks, and Albanians are united beneath a common yoke with this vast Sclavonic family, which has hitherto been kept in easy subjection by its own unconsciousness ; and through the power which its oppressors derived from the abject submission of 35 millions of its number (the Muscovites), from the long prestige of domination of one million of Turks, and the uses made of the prejudices of race of the Germans, who in Austria do not number six, in Prussia eight millions, and whose amount in the whole of Europe is not assumed at more than 35, and probably does not exceed 30 millions, as long as these populations remained unconscious of their present condition, unemulative of the destinies of more favoured races, the amount of the force by which they were kept quiescent was rather matter of speculation as regarded some distant future than of any present, or practical import. The insignificance of the projection which stays the avalanche through years, is immaterial till the mighty mass is set in motion by the thaw which loosens its bonds, or the tempest which rocks it into life.

But this progressive movement, of too extensive a character to be stayed by any of those means which long impeded its commencement, has begun with the double tendency towards repudiation of the system by

which numerous populations have been held in degradation and subjection, and towards antagonism to the Germanic race, which it regards as the accomplice, as in truth it has been the tool of its tyrants.

It threatens the Russian, Austrian, and Turkish empires, and the Prussian kingdom, with a like danger; though according to the antecedents and nature of these despotisms, it offers prospects which widely differ as to the facilities that may be afforded them of averting and evading the peril, which if not averted or evaded must lead to eventual destruction.

But at the present time, whilst the Sclavonic populations, as well as those bowing with them beneath a common yoke, are awakening to consciousness of their condition, the instruments of their oppression are growing less supple and effective in the hands of their oppressors.

The cultivation of the German mind, which once imposed upon Sclavonic ignorance, has ceased to influence it, now that the progress of enlightenment has taught the Sclavonians to look beyond Germany to France and England for the inspirations of their civilisation. On the other hand, the German people itself is becoming daily a tool more unsafe, and less submissive in the hands of those who have hitherto used it. Divided between Prussia, Austria, and a host of petty princes, it is beginning to perceive that its interests point rather to the re-union of all its contiguous and homogenous fragments into one prosperous whole, than to uphold the

ambition of the houses of Brandenburg or Hapsburg; whether by directly playing the jailors in the Prussian or Austrian states, to the amount of a few millions opposed to the long oppressed races, now awakening from their apathy; or whether arrayed in more imposing masses in the back-ground, to support these despotisms, the pillars on which repose the minutely subdivided tyranny of their own petty princes.

In the Russian empire, that larger half of the Polish nation which it has gathered beneath its sceptre is now, like a diseased limb, threatening to impart its gangrene to the Cossacs, a sister people, and through this link to the Muscovite body of the despotism. The nobility and burgesses of Poland, in former insurrections, took either an exclusive or chief part in the struggle of the nation for independence; but now religious persecution has raised the enthusiasm of every Polish peasant, and identified his hatred of the Russian authorities with his religious faith. The other portions of the Polish nation, divided between Prussia and Austria, are animated with all the same feelings as their brethren beneath the rule of Russia, and will thus connect these three despotisms in a common fate.

The author is well aware that the apparent boldness of opinion, which involves states so gigantic in the popular estimation, will appear hazardous and startling at the first blush. Russia's colossal despotism,—the thirty-seven millions of Austria's empire,—the fourteen millions

of the Prussian military kingdom, all seem, when identified in a common cause, to constitute a power of repression, at which all hope seems to wither for the populations from whom their policy keeps the benefit of enlightenment and civilization.

But let the reader turn to the map accompanying these volumes, and he will see that nothing is more artificial than the power of these imposing governments. They have shared between them the most numerous race upon the earth but one,—or they have united whole nations beneath their sceptre dividing frequently an identical people by imaginary lines, whilst others are bound up with them in a common rule by mere conventionalities. No Austria, no Prussia would remain, excepting insignificant provinces of that name, if their sovereigns chose, to-morrow, to sign them away with a few scratches of the pen; but no human authority can blot out Poland, Hungary, or Sclavonia from existence, any more than could be done by England, France, Italy, or Sweden. Nothing but that process of extermination, which has probably never been executed against any numerous people, can therefore affect these masses and millions, which, practically indestructible, are rising to antagonism with perishable kingdoms and empire, which the signatures of a treaty may destroy, and which before one breath of their strong and unanimous volition must be scattered like chaff before the wind.

This is the distinction between what may be designated as natural and artificial states; and a reference to the map will recall to the reader that such only as are natural have yet ventured to give any voice in its own government to their people.

The author is aware that by calling attention to the peculiar circumstances which menace all these eastern states with a common dissolution in the event of any great commotion, that he may occcsion dismay and pain to many whose cause he has at heart, to some through their Romanist or Protestant sympathies, which would lead them to handle tenderly the Prussian and Austrian governments, to others through very awe of the magnitude of the struggle which events are hourly prognosticating, or because they dread to see their cause compromised by connection with an alarming vista of political revolutions, or again through a recollection of alliances and treaties, which based upon a condition of things which has no longer any existence, can no more regulate the future intercourse of governments than stipulations entered into with the Stuart or Vasa dynasties, designating by letter the individual family, but in spirit considering only the hereditary rulers who have ceased to rule.

If, however, this gathering storm threatened results as desolating as they are eventually cheering to humanity, no voluntary blindness to the signs which shadow it forth would stay the progress of its accumulation; whilst in the belief of the writer that political tempest is fraught

with promise to their hopes which nothing but its agency will realise.

It becomes of national importance that the public of England should not be left in utter ignorance of the popular feeling, and of the tendency of opinions in the east of Europe, so that whenever it is convulsed by those changes with which its future is now pregnant, we may not be led through the obscurity of the question to misdirect our sympathies, or to allow a line of policy to be pursued, intended perhaps to further national interests, whilst regardless of those of humanity, but which on the contrary whilst injurious to those rights, can only prove eventually still more to the interests of this country.

The imposing names of certain governments are apt, in the public estimation, to have all the weight to which they would be entitled if really identified with the populations over which they have hitherto ruled; but when these populations are rising, or prepared to rise in antagonism to their governments, it becomes as impolitic as unjust to league with the latter, or to aid, abet, or encourage them against their people by the sanction of our name, alliance or interference.

This was distinctly understood in England when a revolution drove from the throne of France the elder Bourbon branch; and if this result could have been generally foreseen, everyone would have felt how valueless, and in fact pernicious, would have been the

favours of the sovereign and the ministry, who had incurred the odium of the nation about to repudiate them for ever.

Thus our alliances with the Prussian, Austrian, and (under certain circumstances) with the Turkish cabinets are worse than useless, though no friendship with a *nation* is to be disdained.

Those political notions which have survived,—in some cases still sound, in others degenerated into prejudice,—from an epoch since which astonishing changes have silently been taking place, lead us popularly to place great weight on our relations with these governments, as checks to the ambition of France and Russia. This principle was rational at a period when all these governments disposed of their heterogenous populations, as we may now of the subjects of our Indian empire; and these countries may still serve to limit the encroachments dreaded, but only through the will of their masses and millions, not through the dynasties which their indignation threatens to overturn.

If an exception is to be made in favour of the Ottoman Porte, which it is still to our undoubted interest, and to the interests of civilisation, to uphold as a barrier to the spread of the Russian conquest, it is not for the fallacious reason commonly given, that it possesses in itself any power to stay the advance of the imperial eagles; but because, having been comparatively more just, more merciful, and less vexatious to its Sclavonian subjects than

This movement in the east of Europe, which has hitherto escaped the popular notice of its western countries, is indicated by signs as visible as those pointing out in 1830 the imminent change of the Bourbon dynasty of France to the cabinet of St Petersburg, which gave Charles the Tenth so many fruitless warnings on this subject. It is therefore probable that the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian cabinets are fully sensible of what is passing in their own dominions.

We may perhaps trace that consciousness in some of the most recent acts of the reigning families. It is well known that the Emperor Nicholas was anxious for the marriage of that most beautiful of princesses, his daughter Olga, with an archduke of Austria. Austria refused the alliance, for the very reason that Nicholas was solicitous that it should take place, because he had then as still a party amongst the Sclavonians of the Greek persuasion in the Austrian dominions. But since then events progressing with rapid strides, portend a storm which makes absolute princes forget their ambition in the common danger threatening them, to league together against the restless nations they oppress. Hence Austria finding the danger of Russian influence past and a new peril menacing its existence, agrees to that allianee which it before refused; and the emperor Nicholas, so inexorable on this point before, consents to his daughter embracing the catholic faith; and having by his savage and bootless persecution raised the nonconformists of Poland into ardent

enthusiasts, he, now that it is too late, sees the peril to which he has given rise, and attempts to conciliate the enmity of Rome.

The providential prudence which has watched over the hause of Hapsburg, enabling it to repair all its disasters by marriages and treaties, may inspire it to avert the peril. The unprincipled and undignified sagacity which has caused the cabinet of Berlin to crouch abjectly, on one hand to Russia, and to deceive its subjects on the other by illusory promises of a constitution, may lead it in a like manner to elude the threatening danger by entering on the course above adverted to; but if these two states should neglect to do so, then the *mene mene thekel* of their destiny is being figured out in legible characters, which those who run may read.

The author is perfectly aware that the resuscitation of national feeling amongst the scattered fragments of the Sclavonic family—at least amongst those of the Greek communion—originated in the ambition of the Russian tsars, who saw the prospect of uniting them within their empire.

But they have evoked a spirit now beyond their power to lay. On the dawn of political and national consciousness amongst these populations, their first impulse was no doubt to regard the Russian empire with hope and affection; but a little more enlightenment and experience taught them more to dread its iron rule than the yoke of Austria, or of the Porte.

Even the allurement of religious motives is powerless to excite the sympathies of Greek communicants, wherever their church is unoppressed—and it is not now anywhere persecuted—because on narrower acquaintance they discern the abject degradation, and the hopeless bondage into which it has fallen in the Russian empire.

Thence, and from other concurring causes, the revival of Sclavonic nationality, first devised by Russia, is now everywhere anti-Russian in its tendency.

There is another prejudice to which the author cannot help here adverting, which regards every struggle between a people and its established government as the contention of anarchy and infidelity against all law, social order, and religion.

But it is not so in the case to which allusion is being made. There exists, probably, throughout the United Kingdom, scarce a relic of that defunct Toryism which strenuously maintained the right divine of princes; scarce an intolerantly loyal Orangeman, wedded to the ideas of one epoch of prejudice and bigotry, who, if transferred beneath the despotism, not even of Russia, but of Austria and Prussia, would not rise in mortal enmity to his government, or seal his resistance to it with his blood.

In a religious point of view, these anticipated changes, far from threatening to sweep out any human belief, are partially, as in Poland, founded on a religious impulse. Whilst on the one hand they promise to unbind for myriads of men the fetters of private slavery and serfdom,

on the other they will be mainly advocated and carried through by the gentry and nobility of Hungary and Poland, which if not absolutely the most chivalrous and worthy aristocracy, may at least rank with that of Great Britain,—as the only three in Europe which have not incurred the contempt of their respective countrymen.

In attempting in a limited space to call public attention to many important generalities, the author has from several causes been obliged to deviate from the order which he ought more rigorously to have followed, if he had aimed at literary excellence.

He has found himself in that anomalous position for a writer, of hoping that his works will not retain a permanent interest with the public, because he trusts that such truths as he may have set forth, though startling in their novelty on an unknown subject now, will before long have become mere commonplaces.

With this anticipation he has been careless of artistically grouping his facts, so that they were not omitted, and speedily published to the world.

Thus at the close of the two first volumes, whilst the third was going through the press, he has interrupted his observations on the Sclavonic race, to insert an account of the horrible persecution of the Basilian nuns.

It may perhaps be judged, that considering their title, too large a space has been devoted in these volumes to Sclavonic literature, and to the Polish nation. But to this, on one hand, he may reply, that

it is chiefly through the literature of a people and of a period that we may imbue ourselves with its spirit, and that this is peculiarly the case with eastern Europe, at the present moment; for it is to the written exposition of its cotemporary thought and feeling that he has confined his efforts. As regards the Polish nation, one glance at the accompanying map, in which a treble line marks the boundary of a people which artificial distinctions have divided, will speak as to its extent; but it derives a higher importance from the fact that intolerable religious and political persecutions; together with the trammels of individual slavery, unite to fill its population with religious and patriotic zeal, and with an ardent longing for extensive social change. This Polish nation, too, like the Hungarian, must prove the link, acting as conductor to convey to the eastern world beyond, the ideas and civilisation of the west, to which already it aspires.

In a like manner the Polish question may prove one on which France and England in a common sympathy may cordially unite.

In his endeavours to give some account of the Polish emigration, and the parties into which it was divided, it must be understood that the judgment which the author gives of individual character is not his own, but that he only echoes the opinions of a usually adverse party; whilst peculiar circumstances have obliged him to defer the close of the second and commencement of the

third volume, to which the reader is referred, the defence which its partisans offer of the conduct of their leaders. In a like manner the numbers of the partisans adhering to each opinion must be considered as arbitrary; and is, perhaps, impossible to determine with any accuracy, as many emigrants have never distinctly pronounced themselves as belonging to any.

The author, in conclusion, must remind the reader, who may consider the observations he has made as uncourteously harsh and personal towards the emperor Nicholas, that this sovereign has voluntarily incurred a larger share in the responsibility of the horrors enacted within his dominions, than could have been assumed by any other prince, or minister; and that to leave the stigma of acts that he has ordered, or permitted on his people, his ministry, or his church, (on whom they must otherwise fall by implication,) would be to exercise a diplomatic forbearance at the expense of truth and justice.

It is assuredly unfair to brand the cruelties of a petty tyrant like Rosas, who perhaps can only uphold his rule by a system of terror, whilst only censuring by disapprobatory silence the actions of a mighty potentate, seeking by more extensive barbarities to extend an already colossal power.

CHAP. I.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, AND THE SLAVE POPULATION.

Personal responsibility assumed by the Emperor—Injustice of charging the people with the ambition of the Russian cabinet—Distinction between the Muscovites, and Ruthenians; Pacific character of the former—Tendency of the Ruthenians to recall their ancient independence.

In every successive effort to lay bare the policy and tendencies of the Russian Cabinet, an author is forced at the very commencement of his labours, to an incessant repetition. He must answer an ever-recurring objection, which would otherwise divest his subject of its chief interest, and envelop his attempts to treat it in a semblance of contradiction.

It is urged by those disinclined to mere speculative theories, that, "Either Russia is dangerous to her neighbours on account of the strength which places her beyond the reach of western interference, or that she is weak, and not to be dreaded."

They are thence apt to conclude that, whichever

of these positions an author takes up, must considerably diminish the practical importance of his subject, whilst any attempt to prove both must involve self-refutation.

But such is not the case. The Russian government is at once both weak and dangerous. That is to say, that with inherent weakness, it derives a real and formidable strength from the very terror which exaggerated notions of its power inspire.

It may in this respect be compared to the great idol of Juggernauth, composed of inert matter, yet whose imaginary power becomes a horrible reality when filling the minds of men with superstitious awe, which, stronger than the love of life, leads them to throw themselves beneath its chariot wheels.

Fear, far more than corruption, is the instrument by which the Russian Cabinet spreads its influence abroad. The weak and the timid in the immediate neighbourhood of its empire, crouch to its will; and the prudent in more powerful states, so long as it shows some moderation in its ambition, forbear from all interference, fearful of provoking a struggle which in reality the Russian government dreads much more than themselves.

It is on this account, at least as important to point out and popularize the weakness of this

demoralizing power, as to shew the dangers which exist of its extension; or to detail the sufferings of those actually beneath its rule. So sensible is the Russian Cabinet itself to the urgency of keeping up the exaggerated idea of its strength, which it has succeeded in disseminating, that any revelations on this subject are far more dreaded than the disclosure of such acts of tyranny and violence as tend to draw on it the odium of civilized Europe.

Ever since the unfortunate attempt of Mr. Gretch to refute the Marquis de Custine, it has enjoined its agents to abstain from all open discussion with those who fiercely attack its policy or its institutions. Discussion can only lead to further investigation, which would bring ten hideous facts to light in the attempt to convict of one exaggeration; but this wise forbearance did not apply to such attacks as tended to destroy the valuable *prestige* of its colossal power; and its agents have therefore broken their prudential silence in a few feeble efforts to contradict such arguments and statements as might have weakened it.

The personal feeling of Nicholas is apparent in the spirit of these instructions. His sensitiveness to the public opinion of the civilised world appears to have been succeeded by a profound disgust at

the failure of his efforts to conciliate its favour. The ingratitude which is alike insensible to the shower of diamond rings, snuff-boxes, orders, and pensions, unmoved by the condescension with which he has been at the pains of colouring his acts—occasionally inspires him with a lofty disdain which shews itself to the utter dismay of such of his advisers as hand down the traditional policy of his house,—a policy which in this respect has been, whilst never weighing the public opinion of Europe against any tangible advantage, never to neglect an opportunity of cheaply propitiating it.

Just as Nicholas, when smarting perhaps under some provocation, has shewn ocasionally an impolitic disregard of the judgments of the world, so he may easily have been led to pass over in contemptuous and politic silence, all attacks that simply tended to make his government odious; but he could not leave wholly unnoticed such as might lower the general opinion of his power. He can resign himself to be hated, so that he be feared; and therefore is assuredly more injured, and probably more piqued by an assertion of weakness, than by any disclosures of the oppression or cruelty practised by his government.

It is necessary here to remind the reader of the peculiar circumstances which render it impossible

for an author, in treating of the policy of Russia, to divest his subject of an apparently invidious personality, which, where possible, it is always in better taste to avoid. An emperor of Russia at the present day, enjoys the sole and irresponsible control of a power which for extent and completeness bears no analogy to any other existing, if we except that at the disposal of the sovereign of China.

It is true that it does not necessarily follow that he should personally exercise this authority, which, like the emperor Alexander, he may delegate to ministers and favourites, who in this case share so large a portion of the monarch's responsibility as to leave the writer the gracious privilege of censuring or praising *the government* collectively, and of besides attributing to the master—wherever praise is due—the merit of originating all beneficial measures through his judicious choice of men.

But Nicholas, in every sense of the word an autocrat, has chosen to govern for himself. In this respect he is the third sovereign who has followed in the footsteps of Peter the Great, the first Tsar who assumed the title of Emperor, and brought the Russian empire within the European pale. The other two were his grandmother Catherine, and his father Paul. Some, indeed, amongst the rest of

his predecessors, have occasionally, and as caprice directed, snatched up for a brief period the reins of the empire, but only to abandon them again to those who enjoyed their habitual confidence. It is, however, worthy of remark, that one and all of them were trammelled by causes which have ceased to exist for Nicholas, who has therefore enjoyed a liberty of action denied to those who filled the throne before him. It is needless to recall the peculiar circumstances which rendered the greater part of Peter the First's reign one prolonged and perilous struggle,—the power of his nobles, the hatred of the church, and the national prejudice of the old Muscovites. All these dangers vanquished, —but not entirely subdued by his barbaric energy— he transmitted with the crown to his successors. It has been the work of many successive reigns, for their more feeble hands to annihilate the Hydra which the Russian Hercules struck down, but on the accession of Nicholas this work was almost done. His first step to ascend the throne, trampled the last gasp out of the enemy which had once threatened, and even till then faintly struggled with the imperial authority. Catherine, it will be remembered, owed not only the sceptre which she wielded so vigorously, but even her own life to the national and religious

prejudice of the old Muscovites. Paul, whose murder, a mere seraglio revolution, proves nothing, had still ample cause to dread the power of his nobility.

But the last desperate effort made by this body, and quelled on the 12th of December, 1825, left it utterly crushed and powerless, at the mercy of Nicholas. This tragic episode—which by a rare exception only marked the accession of a Russian emperor with the blood of subjects, instead of with imperial blood—placed the new sovereign in a situation more favourable than that of any of his predecessors. The power of the nobility, in which so many people still obstinately persist in believing, had become as completely matter of history as that of the Janissaries, or of the Mamelukes. The Church had not only been long since disarmed as an enemy, but converted into a powerful instrument of domination, by means of which all the old Muscovite feeling (perhaps always more religious than national) had been rendered completely harmless.

Nicholas, therefore, found himself more free and untrammelled, than it has perhaps ever fallen to the lot of a despotic prince to be. Since the commencement of his reign, he has governed for him-

self; thus accepting, whether for good or evil, the full responsibility of all the acts of his government. It must be distinctly understood, that he no more subjects his conduct to the advice of his nominal ministers, than the real ministers of constitutionally governed countries do theirs, to the opinion of those subordinates whose experience they may occasionally consult. In constitutional, and even in most despotic states, the zeal of partisanship may, with some colour of reason, exonerate the sovereign from the chief blame of all that is most reprehensible in the conduct of his government; but nothing can be more unjust than to saddle on the ministers, or on the prejudice and ambition of the people, the consequences of violent or impolitic acts which originate with a supreme master, and which are sometimes at variance both with the advice of his servitors, and with the wishes of the nation over which he rules.

What, for instance, can be more injudicious than the vast navy which the Emperor Nicholas persists in maintaining, and which, far beyond the pecuniary resources of the state, burthens it with a maritime establishment which would assuredly be at least as formidable if reduced to one quarter of its present extent? All the ministers of Nicholas

have been opposed to the imperial mania for this useless and exhausting toy, with the one exception of Prince Menchikoff, the minister of marine, who being without hope of acquiring in any other department an equal influence, continues to encourage the obstinate predilection of his master. But nothing could be more unjust than to render responsible for this costly folly, those advisers who dare not express an opinion on the subject.

Again, there is no Russian village, of which the serf population would not sooner see the independence of the Poles re-established, and all the old Polish provinces restored to independent Poland, than send two additional recruits, chained hand and foot—as they are always sent—to the imperial armies. So indifferent are they to every political question, even with regard to Poland, that there is not a landlord who would give one per cent. of his serfs to prevent a similar result, even in the few instances in which a positive satisfaction would not be felt by him at anything which thwarted the imperial government. What, therefore, can be more unjust than to excuse the violence and cruelty of Nicholas towards the Poles, by attributing it, as we see frequently done by his

apologists, to a necessity entailed upon him by the prejudice and hatred of the Russian nation?

The attempt to avoid a discourteous personality when treating of Russian affairs, must therefore lead a writer into positive injustice; since, if he speak of "the *Russian Cabinet*," where its members are the mere instruments of an individual will,—or of "Russia," where the national feeling is without the faintest influence on the decisions of its chief, he may be unfairly stigmatising a people, or a minister, opposed perhaps in reality to the very act he is censuring.

The full extent of any beneficial measure is due to an autocratic prince who uses, like Nicholas, his privilege of guiding with his own imperial hand the helm of state; but, for the same reason, any attempt to affix on others the blame of violent and oppressive acts, for which he alone can be responsible, is to exercise needlessly a diplomatic reserve, at the expense of truth and justice. It must, therefore, be distinctly understood throughout these volumes, that wherever Russia as a power, or the Russian Cabinet is spoken of, the Emperor Nicholas is meant; the nation or the cabinet being only named as the instruments through which, or wherewith he acts. It is true

that he is not the originator either of the lamentable and demoralizing system of his government, or of the line of policy which he pursues; but then, being more free than any of his predecessors to depart from, he has personally directed it with unscrupulous energy, and occasionally with a boastful and injudicious violence which has threatened to compromise its success. It must not, however, be forgotten, that though Nicholas is at the present moment the incarnation of the policy of the Tsars, with that insatiate thirst of dominion, which mere extension will not satisfy, without an incessant increase of intensity and degree—a policy which distinguished by its reckless violence of action, and its specious smoothness of pretence, views the happiness of the human race as subservient to the vanity or interests of a family,—still the life or death of this powerful individual will probably have but little influence on a state of things, which, existing long before his reign, will, in every human probability, for years to come survive him.

Singularly enough, Louis Phillipe, the only other European prince who has the reputation of governing for himself,—at least as far as the most consummate sagacity and talent can enable him to

govern in a constitutional state,—represents a peaceful and progressive system, which will be perhaps as much endangered by his death as the march of Russian despotism will remain uninfluenced by the decease of Nicholas.

Whilst, therefore, Nicholas may alike be branded as having done nothing to avert a monstrous evil, and as having used it with savage and unrelenting energy, he must be saved the odium of identifying his existence with the lamentable condition of the people beneath his rule, or with the dangers to be dreaded by adjoining provinces from a desolating incorporation with the empire over which he presides.

The peaceful prosperity of France may, perhaps, be unhappily interrupted by the death of Louis Phillippe,—the hollow and barbaric imitation of western civilization, selfishly raised up in Egypt for the sole advantage of its ruler, may fairly be expected to crumble on the death of the old viceroy;—and the decease of Metternich will seriously endanger the solidity of the heterogenous and decrepid empire which he governs;—but it is not so with Nicholas and Russia. Paradoxical as it may seem, perhaps the best interests of humanity have more to gain by his life than by his death. The

fitful violence to which his temper causes him occasionally to give way, and the effects of which are not to be obliterated whenever his cooler judgment shew him their impolicy, appears rather to increase than to diminish with age. Recent appearances have even given rise to the belief amongst many Russians, that some tendency exists to the hereditary aberration, which could scarcely be designated permanent insanity, either in Paul his father, or in his brother Constantine; and from which even Alexander was not wholly exempt; though with him it assumed sometimes the form of a superstitious mysticism, and at others, of the gloomy despondency which long preceded his dissolution. It is easy to conceive that the positive madness of a sovereign must be less injurious to the interests of his family, than that which only occasionally exhibits itself, and then verges too closely on eccentricity and passion to allow them to take cognisance of it.

Whatever the future may bring forth, it is, however, certain, that if Nicholas only continues to act as through the past, the impatient violence which he cannot always restrain, will do more to weaken, or at least to raise up formidable dangers against his power, than several such reigns as that of Alexander.

Though in the general tenor of his policy and conduct he may walk in the footsteps of his predecessors, his fitful and frequent departure from its habitual prudence will far more than counterbalance the advantages which might be supposed to accrue from his energy.

The real progress of Russia has generally been made as silently as possible; but Nicholas cannot always restrain his impatience or his exultation, and has often allowed it to break forth against his cooler judgment, which leads him, when too late, to attempt to repair the injury done.

This has been apparent both in many of his acts, and in the mode of carrying them out. For instance: in his imprudent eagerness to tighten the rein in the principality of Finland, as soon as the treaty which guaranteed some of its privileges had expired,—though on the possession of Finland, perhaps, depends the eventual security of St. Petersburgh itself.

Ten or fifteen years more of indulgent government might have sufficed to attach this peaceful people to the rule of Russia; but Nicholas could not wait thus long; though it is true that when the mischief was done, and that he had given his Finnish subjects a taste of what they might

eventually expect, he again relaxed in some degree his grasp. Again: in Poland, not content with the difficult attempt of denationalizing a whole people, he complicated it by gratuitously rousing the mortal enmity of Rome, and by commencing a virulent religious persecution on a scale of almost unprecedented magnitude. He has allowed his personal antipathy to the Jews to carry him lengths which have drawn on him the attention of the whole civilized world. It is to be observed that most of these acts of unscrupulous violence, though quite in character with Russian policy, yet differ from it in being injudiciously as well as wickedly undertaken, and are in many instances distinguished by the boastful arrogance with which they are needlessly avowed. And yet these ukases—if differing from the usually insidious smoothness of those which have so often clothed in the most plausible language the intent of cruelty, and treachery, and spoliation,—do not, as it might be imagined, stamp the recklessness of purpose of open and unswerving tyranny. No,—in most instances, as soon as he has succeeded in outraging public opinion, that dangerous enemy which, sooner or later, must shiver the sceptre of the Tsars,—he appears to repent of this departure from precedent, and en-

deavours, when too late, to smoothen down the effect of his imprudence, till a fresh fit of anger leads him to repeat his error. Thus, to judge by their conduct on many occasions, the predecessors of Nicholas would not, for an important object, have scrupled at the iniquitous transplantation of the Jewish population, undertaken by him from a capricious aversion; but they would have veiled their object, instead of avowing it by an ukase which rung in the ears of Europe, and forced on it the conviction of an enormity, which would have been otherwise disbelieved. It would have been so easy to have made this measure appear on paper a scheme of pure philanthropy, as Catherine did when dividing Poland; and Russia would have found so many defenders anxious to adopt this version. No sooner, however, was all the evil done, than the Tsar began to regret his imprudence, and to issue orders, perfectly illusory indeed, but intended to convey the impression of having relented in his severity. He had thus provoked, but would not brave to the end, the animadversion of Europe; and yet, so sudden and irresistible seem to be for him the impulses of violence, that scarce another year has elapsed before he shows once more his vindictive antipathy towards the unhappy Israelites, by an

ukase respecting their costume. The persecution itself is comparatively insignificant in the history of such a despotism; and a private order to a governor, or to a police official, would have insured its execution; but Nicholas could not resist adding to this puerile and vexatious infliction, the weight of his imperial signature.

Before proceeding to examine the causes which render the Russian Empire, in its present state, so much more vulnerable than is commonly supposed, the author cannot help alluding to the "Revelations of Russia," a work previously published by him, with the view of giving a general insight into the condition of that empire. Though received at first with a suspicion of exaggeration, no serious refutation has ever met his statements, which have since been every day confirmed; and he may perhaps be pardoned for recalling a passage from a letter published in April last, in the *Athenæum*, and dated St. Petersburgh, wherein the correspondent mentions that he has known as much as 500 roubles, or £22, paid for the perusal of the book in question; proving how rigorous must be its prohibition. Notwithstanding the exorbitant price which this sedulous exclusion naturally occasions, two hundred copies have been smuggled into Russia by Tiflis and the

ports on the Black sea; a demand which of itself, under existing circumstances, is a striking tribute to the general veracity of the author's portraiture. The effect of its circulation amongst the Russians, and those most intimately acquainted with the Russian empire, has been to occasion many of these readers to place at his disposal a considerable mass of information which—generally confirmatory of the opinions expressed in his work—has in a few instances tended to modify his ideas.

In the "Revelations of Russia," the author has drawn a formidable picture of the resources apparently at the disposal of a Russian autocrat, and then pointed out a cause which neutralises these advantages. He has endeavoured to shew how the formidable elements of power enumerated, are paralysed by the hopeless, incredible, and all-pervading venality which renders the empire comparable to a mighty line-of-battle ship, with abundant armament and stores, but completely rotten in the hull. But he has been reproached by certain Ruthenians with neglecting other causes of internal weakness, or at least with having imbibed too favourable an idea of the political homogeneity of the Muscovite, or pure Russian, and of the Ruthenian, or Cossack races.

In all the very imperfect descriptions of the Russian Empire which had previously been published, the important distinction had never been made with sufficient clearness between the Muscovite and the Ruthenian, vulgarly called Little-Russian population, to which the Cossack tribes belong. And yet, perhaps, no two people united by the bonds of a common faith, and of an almost common language, ever so widely differed. The pale, sallow Muscovite, timid and servile, and fitted only to play the part of an Armenian trader, is as unlike, morally as physically, to the bold, vivacious Little Russian, eager for war, enamoured of adventure, and shewing in his very demeanour a comparative independence. It is to their dominion over the latter people that the Russian Tsars chiefly owe the extension of their empire. Rallied under their rule when separated by religious and political persecution from Poland, they have contributed far more than the dense and slavish masses of the old Russian population, to spread abroad their power. From the Ruthenians sprang all those numerous hordes of Cossacks rather encamped than settled at hundreds of miles of interval from the Don, across the whole width of northern Asia,—the conquerors of Siberia,—the tamers of the Tartar.

But the sedentary portion of the people to whom they owe their origin, not only very far exceeds in number the warrior tribes of Cossacks, but bears no inconsiderable proportion to the remainder of the Russian nation. They cannot be reckoned at less than ten out of six-and-forty millions, whilst the wealth of the territory they inhabit, their frontier situation, the rapidity with which they seem spreading over the plains of southern Russia, and their identity with the tribes of military Cossacks, all add amazingly to their importance.

This people, the author of these volumes was careful in the "Revelations of Russia," to distinguish from the Muscovite; but he appears to have considered it too hopelessly, as what it had been so long, a formidable but passive instrument in the hands of Russian sovereigns. "Nothing," say such of the Ruthenians as disapprove of this judgment, "could have appeared more plausible a very few years ago, but since then, a movement has been taking place, so gradual and imperceptible indeed as to escape a stranger's eyes, but which may eventually exercise a prodigious influence on the destinies of the Russian Empire."

Within a very brief space of time, a singular

but marked fermentation has arisen in the mind of the Sclavonic nations of Austria and of Turkey. Awakening from the long apathy of centuries, they seem likely at no distant day to play a part for which their antecedents, and the want of general information respecting their importance and condition, has little prepared the British public.

In dwelling more fully on this subject in a subsequent chapter, it may be necessary to point out how the Russian Cabinet, for the sake of forwarding its own ambitious views, first sought to awaken to a sense of their humiliation the Sclavonic populations beyond its pale of the empire. It will, however, suffice for our present purpose, to shew that the craving for independence, and the tendency to fraternise, which has gradually arisen amongst the Sclavonians within the empire, has taken a turn very fatal to the policy of the Tsars, since almost everywhere accompanied by a strong and increasing antipathy to their government,

This resuscitation of a national and independent feeling has at length extended to the Ruthenians; thus embracing every branch of the Sclavonic family except the Muscovite. The Ruthenian, or Little-Russian people, though distinct in character and idiom both from the Poles and

Muscovites, has far more analogy to the former than to the latter. Scarcely two centuries have yet elapsed since its separation from Poland and incorporation with the Russian empire. Originally driven by the hatred which civil and religious wars engender, to seek the protection of the Muscovite, the virulent antipathy of the Ruthenians towards the Poles, has in the course of time subsided, and is being fast succeeded by all the sympathies to which analogy of character and identity of interests can give rise. The Ruthenian idiom, poetry, and traditions, which once bid fair to be lost or merged in the Muscovite, are distinctly reviving; and the revival of an extinct nationality is occasionally full of significance, though more often so puerile and unimportant as to be even encouraged by an ambitious government within its own dominions; as in the case of Finland, where it has been considered by the Tsars as a harmless set-off to the deeply-rooted Swedish feeling still prevalent in that principality. But with the Little-Russians such a tendency would have a very different import; and it is of this tendency that some of their countrymen contend that unequivocal signs have been recently manifesting themselves to those who dwell amidst its population.

It was the happy accident of the dissensions which so long enfeebled both the Poles and Ruthenians, which enabled the Tsars to acquire strength sufficient subsequently to protect the former. A happy accident placed in their dependence this angry and warlike race, which became in their hands an instrument of such extensive conquest; and it has of course always been their policy to confound as much as possible their new people with the Muscovite. So assiduously had they endeavoured to disseminate this impression throughout Europe, that the Cossack, differing from the Muscovite as much as the Lape from the Italian, is vulgarly taken as the type of the Russian. The Little-Russian's recollection of his Polish fraternity, and independent origin, at first merged in his hatred, would probably have entirely disappeared, if the differences of character betwixt him and the Muscovite had been less striking, or if he had been less heavily oppressed by a yoke, which, with the improved mechanism of centralization, becomes every day more galling;—as it is, he is beginning to insist and to plume himself on distinctions of race, idiom, and character, of which he formerly neglected to take cognisance. It is true that this is not the case with the Cossack tribes, but then it must be

borne in mind that these military tribes and colonies commonly enjoy an independence long since denied to their Ruthenian brethren; and furthermore, their warlike avocations would give a colouring of military discipline to any restraint to which, under that pretence, the Little-Russians would cheerfully have submitted.

The author does not go the length of imagining, in common with these patriotic Ruthenians, that any danger to the despotism of the Tsars is to be anticipated from the march of public mind amongst their countrymen, any more than from the sole and unaided influence of any causes operating within any part of the Russian empire,—always indeed excepting Poland. Inclusive of the condition of that country, there are, however, perils menacing from without, which may very fatally influence this as well as other causes of internal weakness; constituting, as they do, a germ of dissolution, which, if incapable of any proximate self-developement, yet may rapidly attain it through external agency.

Before proceeding to investigate the relations of the Imperial Cabinet with the neighbouring governments, and neighbouring races, on which it has long exercised an extensive action, now likely to

recoil against itself;—before examining even the condition of these vast and varied additions made within the last half century to the empire,—it is necessary to look closely into the position in which it stands with regard to the great bulk of its Russian population.

It will be readily understood that such possessions as Poland, Finland, and the trans-Caucasian provinces, do not offer the same solid elements of power as the domination over fifty millions of people united by the bond of a common religion, and concentrated in a comparatively limited space of territory.

Those least imposed upon by the array of figures, or the display of myriads of barren and unpeopled acres, are apt to view this fact with alarm. They are led to consider the Russian population as a compact body of gigantic unity and pliancy, which, fashioned to the hand of despotism, gives it a vitality and a preponderance of strength sufficient to enable it in the long run not only to absorb, but eventually to assimilate the weaker elements with which it comes in contact. In short, the Russian Tsars, blindly obeyed by so vast a population, were considered to enjoy all the advantages of being inaccessible in the body of

their power; and it was therefore evident that their dominion must inevitably extend by the chances of a prolonged struggle with neighbours, whose success could only enable them to baffle without retorting an aggression, and to whom defeat was fatal.

But in viewing this subject, two important onsiderations are apt to escape our notice, and yet they of themselves suffice to render the invulnerability of the empire a fiction.

The first is, the fact already mentioned, and which will be more amply reverted to, that ten millions of this population—the only warlike portion of it—are a people as distinct in origin and character from the remaining thirty-five, as the Muscovites from the inhabitants of Poland. The devotion of this race to the Tsars, under certain circumstances, is becoming daily more problematical. The Russian despotism has failed to digest this antithetic aliment. The efforts of a century have not sufficed to blend the Muscovite and Little-Russian. Like oil and wine, their natures will not let them mix; or where they have done so in a time of trouble and of agitation, the inherent tendency of repulsion operates again in the first moment of repose. Should the growing sympathies

of the Ruthenians for the rest of their Sclavonic brethren be kindled at any critical juncture, a consuming fire will thus be lighted in the very vitals of the state; and on the probabilities of such an accident, we shall elsewhere dwell at greater length.

The next consideration is derived from a due appreciation of the character of the Muscovites themselves. With many redeeming qualities, there exists no race more fitted to become the blind and submissive tool of despotism. In this respect it differs even from the most servile branches of the vast and varied Sclavonic family. Though any sincere devotion to the Tsars may be confined to the serfs, the proportion which this class bears amongst the Muscovites to the free population, is very far greater than for the whole empire. The collective population is reckoned at 63 millions, and of these 36 are Muscovites. The slaves amount to 45 millions, according to the lowest computation; and of these, nearly 35 are Muscovites,—the conquering and absorbing race thus affording the unprecedented spectacle of remaining in a thraldom more complete than those absorbed and conquered. Over these serfs the dominion of the Tsars is firmly established. It

rooted as deeply as those religious prejudices which in some barbaric creeds spring up, without affection, indeed, for their terrible divinity, but still not alone from fear; and of which the votaries do not only bow to the terrors of their God, but view in him an avenger, if not a benefactor. These blindly obedient millions would no doubt themselves furnish a Russian sovereign with unprecedented elements of power, were it not, as the author has striven to show elsewhere, for the utter corruption so hopelessly ingrafted on all ranks of the people, as to deprive the government of any means of effecting the organization of this material. What avail hundreds of thousands, of which only tens can ever reach the scene of action, on account of that consummate venality which has become a second nature to the Russian, and which renders it so impossible to move these formidable masses, that a Russian regiment suffers more before it reaches its own frontier, than an English corps after years of service in India?

But there is another equally important feature to be found in the character and temper of this Muscovite people, which tends to diminish very much the value of its submissive fidelity to its ruler; viz., its pacific disposition, and its absolute want of

national ambition and pride. There exist other races even less warlike,—there are others whose degraded condition is lower than even that of the Muscovite, but there is no people in the world which exceeds him in apathy for the national glory or advancement. Most of those who have noticed this peculiarity—which all who have any intimate acquaintance with the Russians never fail to observe,—are apt to attribute it wholly to the profound servitude in which he is plunged. But though servitude and oppression may go far towards extinguishing in the individual that pride and interest in the welfare of the state, which can only find its full developement in the breast of a freeman, still the past history of the world, and the present condition of some of its races, proves incontestibly, that patriotic pride, or at least national ambition, is not incompatible with a state of bondage. The thirst for conquest has been in all ages the most successful means which despots have employed to reduce heir subjects to this condition. An ambitious people, regarding absolute submission as a means, has been prone to look forward only to the end, which excused in its own eyes the humiliation of the yoke which it endured. The Polish serf, sunk in a state of servitude as degrading as the Musco-

vite's, was yet always keenly alive to the feeling of which the latter has always been insensible. Beneath the rule of Islamism, the hope of conquest and extension has made whole nations bend in contented slavery. For this lure held out by the prophet, the Arab sold his birthright, abandoning the freedom cherished for tens of centuries in his deserts, to prostrate himself at the footstool of the despotism which promised him the subjugation of the world.

Without entering into the question of how far a race may in the long run be affected by the condition in which it is forcedly placed, it is evident that this feature in the Muscovite character is not wholly to be attributed to his servile state, but arises in some measure from an inherent tendency. The Muscovite, in fact, is in temper an Armenian. Where left to his own free agency, he sets no value upon power or glory. He does not wish to rule; he seeks not for precedence; he only aspires to be allowed to trade, and to be let to live in peace.

This irresistible propensity to traffic, and to intervene betwixt the producer and consumer, is one of which the gratification has of course become nationally impossible, by the very extent to which his people has multiplied. There is no room in the

world for thirty-six millions of Muscovites to play the part of the Hebrew and the Armenian. But though his strong instinct leads him to trade and brokerage, he is well fitted for agricultural pursuits,—and the nature of the country he inhabits would allow him, in following this avocation, so well in accordance with his pacific genius, to attain that wealth which he seems alone to prize. Something, however, of this apathy and indifference, no doubt is owing to the severity with which the Russian Tsars have bent and broken the national spirit to their will; but by a strange inconsistency, after using every imaginable effort to reduce their people to the condition of automatons, they imagine that they can breathe at pleasure into them the life of animation for a given purpose.

Nicholas, who has been more unremitting than any of his predecessors in extinguishing the faintest semblance of independence or opinion, has sought most arduously to inspire the nation with a thirst for war and for extension, and appears surprised to find that it should remain mute and unmoved by this appeal.

Like the ass of the fable, who had nothing to lose by a change of masters, it is no exaggeration to say that the vast majority of the Muscovites, so

that their religious prejudices be not brought into play, would bend contentedly to a foreign yoke, rather than make the slightest voluntary sacrifice to extend their dominion over other races. But though averse to war, patient of servitude, and indifferent to the national glory, we must not be led to regard the character of this people with undue contempt, or to join hastily in the sweeping judgment which unjustly stigmatises it as worthy of its debased condition. A poetic, but unfounded prejudice, leads us with nations, as with individuals, to underrate the value of useful but ignoble qualities, and to identify others which have no necessary connexion. We are apt to regard valour as inseparable from generosity,—ferocity and bravado as always indicative of cowardice. We are apt to disbelieve in the virtues of a race divested of public spirit, of patriotism, or of courage to resist oppression; and yet nothing can be more erroneous. There exist nations, as there do individuals, cruel, vindictive, or boastful, and yet brave; tribes, whose unquenchable spirit of independence and adventurous temper, renders even the restraint of agricultural avocations unendurable, and in whom it is yet allied to weaknesses and vices which can never allow them to occupy any but an inferior station in

the scale of humanity. So, in like manner, the Muscovite, without the requisite energy to shake off the most benumbing oppression, is yet calculated to play a respectable and useful, if not a brilliant part in the history of civilization. Just as the tastes, capacities, or habits of individuals fit them for certain pursuits, so nations may be said to have their peculiar vocations. This vocation we have no right to thwart, or treat with any want of deference, so long as it proves beneficial, or even not injurious to the great human community. To some it has been given, to advance the great cause of improvement, by daring examples of thought and action, or by the cultivation of arts which might tend to refine and purify the energies thence derived. Some, urged by irresistible impulses, ransack the world, scattering through it the seeds of knowledge and of civilization. But this can never be the case with more than a few millions,—few in comparison with the earth's inhabitants. Like Columbus and his companions, they may discover and conquer in the regions of thought, of art, of science, of invention,—but the discovery and the conquest once effected, they must give place to the laborious patience of the colonist and cultivator. This is the destiny inevitably marked out for the

great majority of mankind: its laws must operate every day as civilization advances on a larger portion even of the very nations which now lead its onward march. There is nothing, therefore, either contemptible or humiliating in the obvious mission of the Muscovite, towards which his inclinations and his instincts lead him; viz., to be allowed, undisturbed by thought of war or of ambition, to cultivate in peace the fertile territory settled by his race, and to carry on an unrestricted trade both of exchange and transit.

In the same manner that there are turbulent tribes never yet subdued, and nations violently self-enfranchised, which yet make a deplorable use of their anarchic independence, so there is every reason to believe that far from abusing, the Muscovite would turn a state of comparative freedom to the best account, by deriving from it an increase of prosperity which would benefit both himself and his neighbours.

From these useful and pacific avocations, to which alone his instincts prompt, he is deterred by his social condition and by his government. He, who progressing in peaceful civilization, might, under favouring auspices, have drawn wealth as a happy cultivator from the soil, or have interchanged

with the West the produce of Central Asia and of his country,—is forced by his Tsar to follow the hateful trade of a soldier; or at least his interests and well-being are sacrificed to a system of aggrandisement and conquest, with which he has not the remotest sympathy.

Not only, therefore, is the Muscovite prevented from following profitable and congenial occupations, for the sake of extending all the miseries of his own condition over other portions of the human family, but he is furthermore so employed against the bent of his natural inclinations, without deriving even the slightest pride or satisfaction from the triumphs of which he is at once the instrument and the victim.

The position of the Russian people is in this respect as unparalleled as cruel, for it is difficult to cite any other which has ever entered even forcedly on a career of conquest, without deriving some compensation from the national success, even amongst the miseries or the servitude which aggrandisement may have entailed. The Germanic portion even of the Austrian empire, is not without some feeling of exultation at the dominion of its emperors in Italy, but—setting aside the Muscovite nobility, profoundly inimical to its government,—it would

be difficult to find amongst the people which is so devoted to it, one solitary individual who would not prefer the slightest diminution of the duties on British cottons, or on distillation, to the uninteresting intelligence that the imperial eagles were floating victoriously over Stockholm, Constantinople, or Calcutta.

This remarkable peculiarity in the Old-Russian character, which renders it impossible for the cabinet to inoculate the people in the faintest degree with its boundless ambition, becomes, therefore, a most serious consideration in estimating the value of its submissive attachment to the Tsars. Of this most solid instrument of their power, the author is, however, so little disposed to underrate the importance, that, before proceeding further, he proposes examining with his reader what modifications it may undergo, and investigating more closely the relation in which the Russian autocrat stands with these compact thirty-six millions of Muscovites, the nucleus of his empire, around which so many discordant elements have been gathered.

CHAP. II.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, AND THE SLAVE POPULATION.

Identity between the terms slave, and serf, in Russia—Distinctions between the Emperor's slaves and the private slaves—Condition, prospects, and feelings of both.

If—including Finland, Poland, the German and Caucasian provinces,—forty-five out of every sixty-three individuals are in a state of servitude throughout the whole Russian empire,—when we turn to the Muscovite population, we find it almost wholly in that deplorable condition. The proportion of slaves which it contains exceeds thirty-four out of every thirty-six of its number. In examining the mutual relations of the Russian government and of its Muscovite subjects, it is therefore fitting to commence with the serf class, whose overwhelming majority, and whose exclusive and superstitious fidedity gives it such preponderating importance.

But firstly, let us be allowed an observation which naturally suggests itself on the term *serf*. In England, and indeed throughout all parts of Europe where feudal institutions once prevailed, we have derived our ideas of serfdom from its former condition, as it existed in those countries, when modified by the revival of old Roman municipal institutions, by the spirit of chivalry, and by the protective power of the Church.

Undoubtedly the fate of the serf was little enviable, but still not to be confounded with that of the negro slave; and accordingly a very different meaning attaches in the public estimation to the term of serf, and to that of slave.

In England, those who with an instinctive veneration for prosperity and power, seek always to view in its least unfavourable light the reprehensible conduct of the mighty, and who reserve their virtuous indignation for the derelictions of the feeble—who denounce and anathematise petty states for conniving at the slave-trade, but who eschew even discussion on the transgressions of the powerful—these, and a still more numerous class, willing to shut their eyes to wrong which they would be incapable of regarding with indifference—all carefully use the word *serf*, even when faintly

pitying the Russian peasant; thus half in hope, and half in self-deception, laying the flattering unction to their souls, that he is not a slave: like those nursed in the lap of luxury, and sensibly alive to the miseries of others, whose indolent benevolence accepts with eager and culpable credulity the consolatory arguments which tax with falsehood and exaggeration accounts of suffering harrowing to their feelings,—who, compassionate in their natures, allow the houseless wretch to pass them faint with inanition, in the comfortable belief that he is a mendicant impostor going to his revels,—whose ears are given so readily to the refutation of asserted wretchedness, and so slowly to the proofs of its existence, that it is only by incessant repetition that credence can be forced upon them, of what they ingenuously avow themselves so loth to believe. There exists no party at the present day in England, and no public individual who would dare to weigh any considerations of loss or gain with the abolition of negro slavery in the British dominions, or the suppression of the slave-trade out of them; none who would call in question the horrors, or at least the immorality of either; and in fact, even few who now, whenever the opportunity presents itself, neglect what po-

pularity may be attained through zeal as abolitionists: yet there are men in both houses of parliament who can remember when the emancipation of the blacks, and the abolition of the infamous trade in human flesh was regarded by the senate and the nation as a scheme of visionary philanthropy, which session after session was triumphantly defeated by ridiculing the necessity of its adoption. In vain the horrors and the miseries of such a state of things were brought before them,—the majority preferred to turn from this undeniable evidence to a consolatory belief in the refutation attempted. It was only by accumulating these proofs, and bringing them year after year incessantly under the eyes of the nation, that at length it could no longer refuse to admit the truth; and it is no small praise, that once convinced, albeit against its will, it rose like one man to relieve the wrong of which it had been so long and obstinately incredulous.

However tardily convinced, there is happily now but one opinion in England on the subject of slavery. Right or wrong, the time is gone by for the arguments of its apologists. All men are alike ashamed to mention it by its proper name, with any thing but unqualified condemnation; and on this account, so large a portion of the public,

and of its organs, in all allusions to the bondage of five-and-forty millions in the Russian empire, take refuge in the term of *serfdom*.

With every respect for that practical bent of the English genius which, unlike the fitful enthusiasm of France, raised in an hour for any noble purpose, and exhausted in an hour, leads it, even in its persevering benevolence, to prefer the pursuit of objects the most feasible,—it must not be confounded with the culpable weakness which would rather shut its eyes to an unpalatable truth, than raise its voice in reprobation, or find its feelings strained to sympathy. It is the duty of every writer on the Russian empire, to make the unbeliever probe the very wound from which he turns away, and ring incessantly in his unwilling ears, that these forty-five millions of fellow-creatures, the Russian serfs, are in every sense of the word as completely slaves as the negroes captured on the coast of Africa, and sold in the markets of the new world.

The few who having entered more deeply into the question, are aware of this distincton without a difference in the nature of their respective bondage, still derive some consolation from considerations of which the futility will be naturally exposed as we proceed with our investigation.

"Dark and pitiable as may be the condition of the Russian serfs," they argue, "it is still progressing towards improvement. On the one hand, the state of debasement of this vast population, and on the other the interests of the nobility, forbid any but a very gradual solution of the question. This it is receiving. None could untie so promptly and so safely these cruel bonds as its despotic government. It has the power, and for a long time past it has avowed its intention of using it for this purpose. Every thing seems to guarantee the conduct of the Russian autocrat in this repsect,—his jealousy of his nobility—his wish to humble it,—the traditional policy of the throne according with his personal vindictiveness. Who, in fact, can be more interested than he in the speediest possible enfranchisement of the loyal serfs of his empire, at the expense of his nobility, which he mistrusts? It is evident, therefore, that it could not be confided to better hands, since who can have more power to effect its cessation, or be more interested in it,—who have less to gain by its continuance than the chief of an unlimited despotism, whose station gives him already absolute power over every individual in his realm?"

Nothing would appear more reasonable than such

a supposition; one can hardly conceive any possible position in which a man can be more free from all temptation of playing the slave-master, than when, by the very nature of his sovereignty, he exercises such unbounded controul over every human being in his empire, that nothing more can be added to the extent of his authority. To possess civilly those of whom he is politically master in so unreserved a manner, must appear an aimless and useless distinction; whilst on the other hand, to allow the possession of one set of his subjects by another, is to tolerate a sort of *imperium in imperio*, which cannot fail to be repugnant to his policy. It would therefore seem impossible that the emperors of Russia can be any thing but the hearty abolitionists, which for several reigns past they have almost avowed themselves. In as far as removing the private serfs from the power of their lords, there can be no doubt of the sincerity either of the past or present policy of the crown; neither can there be any doubt of the many practical difficulties which retard its accomplishment in any but a gradual manner.

But is this deliverance intended to be absolute? —when the mortgaged serfs are forfeited to the crown, does the crown grant them even nominal

freedom! No,—they are then added to the twenty-one millions and a half of serfs in its own private domain; and thus the sovereigns of Russia, whilst they have succeeded in disseminating abroad the opinion that it is their mission to abolish servitude in their dominions, have been, and are still, the chief slave proprietors in their empire,—holding upwards of twenty-one out of every forty-five serfs within it!

The private slave-holder is deterred from emancipating his slaves by considerations of vital interest. This human property constitutes his only revenue. The land is valueless without the peasantry, and it is not in his power to make any law or regulation which would save him not alone from loss, but from absolute ruin. With the crown it is widely different,—every imaginable motive of policy and of interest point out the expediency of such a course.

In giving its serfs at least the same nominal freedom as is enjoyed by the private serf, occasionally emancipated by his baron, an emperor of Russia would risk no pecuniary sacrifice, since he can tax in any way he pleases any of his subjects, and can make by a dash of his pen the most stringent laws and regulations to enforce his object.

On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that considerable advantage would be hence derived. He would not have to relinquish the slightest portion of that authority which may have attractions for the private slave-master, since there is no distinction in his power as autocrat over the first noble or the lowliest slave in his dominions. Nothing would prevent him from exercising over this population every restraint from which the slightest benefit to his power is now conceived to be derived. With the system of administration pursued in the Russian empire, he might even render this emancipation in fact illusory, and yet secure gratuitously all the advantages of conferring a boon in the estimation of his own serfs,—of securing still more firmly the attachment of the private serfs, through the hopes inspired by such an example,—and of appearing incontestibly in the eyes of Europe and of history, as a great emancipator and reformer. Viewed in this character, the public opinion of the world would excuse the violence, the oppression, the severity, and the ambition conducing to increase a power which was applied to effect a purpose apparently so great and noble.

So difficult does it appear to account for this want of resolution to emancipate the slaves of the imperial domain, in the face of so many causes

concurring to establish its expediency, that it seems difficult to find any solution of this strange hesitation more plausible than that once offered by a philosophic Russian to the author.

"Natural," he contended, "as is the comprehension of *meum* and *tuum* to the human mind, it is limited in extent, and there is a something so monstrous in the idea of a really unlimited despotism, which gives to one individual not merely extensive privileges over a large portion of the earth, but the absolute possession of it with everything living and inanimate which it contains, that the human mind, even in the despot, has seldom power to conceive it upon such an extended scale. Unless gifted with extraordinary mind, the inherent love of property is generally found to operate with him, and he feels an indefinite longing to hold privately something within these vast possessions whose boundlessness fatigues him. This is the reason why, except in a few rare instances, really absolute princes, when they hold as complete possession of everything within their realms as it is ever possible for frail humanity to do, yet create themselves a private property—a smaller within their wider domain; adopting the feelings and the aimless avarice which is based

upon the more limited consciousness of ownership which alone the ordinary intellect can perfectly conceive.

Innumerable examples have been afforded of men in such situations, seriously influenced by the futile and arbitrary distinctions they have established betwixt their private and their public rights, even when the latter comprise all other which can possibly be assumed. It is therefore only to the private feeling of the slave-master, unwilling to abandon his privilege as such,—contained though it be within the attributes of the emperor,—that we can refer, to account with any degree of plausibility for the impolitic reluctance shewn by the crown in the emancipation of its serfs.

It is true that a strong and not unwise determination, (as regards the interest of the Tsars) is exhibited to keep the moujiks as much as possible in their present barbarism and ignorance, in accordance with the policy of the present reign; which is, for the first time since the days of Peter the Great, designedly retrogressive. Instruction was formerly forced upon the people; its nobility were, until recently, encouraged to travel abroad. The latter are now almost imprisoned in the empire. The Emperor Nicholas has by ukase

prohibited the admission of the lower order from the elementary to the superior schools; he has forbidden the establishment of temperance societies, and has branded the literary tastes which his servants may exhibit, by classing it with insubordination and drunkenness—as a vicious tendency on which it is the duty of their superiors to report. It appears to be now received, that at the present day more is to be dreaded than hoped for from the civilisation of these masses, by whose enlightenment his predecessors thought to profit. To keep the serf in his present ignorance and barbarism, it is however by no means necessary to retain him in personal servitude; and though this consideration, added to the many which have been adduced, may at any moment lead to his nominal enfranchisement, it will unhappily only be when the growing precautions taking to trammel him with other bonds, will leave him no advantage in his new condition.

The Muscovite serf population is undeniably attached, with very few exceptions, to the Tsars; and this serf population comprises a large portion of the burgher class; because the trader, whether simple mestchinine, or first, second, or third guild merchant,—most commonly belongs to it.

Now, though it must not be forgotten that the slaves or serfs of the empire form two distinct bodies, of which 23-45ths are the property of the landholders, and upwards of 21-45ths appertain to the domain of the emperor or empress, still this serf property of the crown is of comparatively recent origin, having accumulated to its present extent from the confiscations of latter reigns, and from the forfeit mortgages of the nobility. The crown serfs and the private serfs were not, therefore, as now, two classes nearly equal in numbers, but the great mass of the peasantry belonged to the latter category, and at that time derived those feelings of attachment towards the Tsars which still continuing to influence them in their new condition, distinguish, if in a much lesser degree, the crown serf as well as the private serf. Ever since the systematic abasement of the nobility, begun by Peter, and continued by his successors with more or less of energy and vigour, the Russian sovereigns have been viewed by the people, as stepping betwixt them and their lords, to protect and snatch them from their tyranny.

Though there may be certain races which submit more readily, and thrive better than others in servitude,—like the Negro in the black, and the

Muscovite in the white breed of men,—there are none who ever become so far accustomed to it as not to wish to leave it directly they have obtained the faintest glimpse of a freer condition; particularly when the nature of their bondage is as oppressive as in Russia, where the weight of slavery has never been alleviated by partaking in the slightest degree of that semi-patriarchal character which in some Mahomedan countries causes the slave to be regarded as a humble member of his master's family.

The Russian sovereigns, at the very outset of the period of the nominal civilisation of the empire, succeeded in conveying to the peasantry the impression that they would eventually relieve them from the galling yoke of private servitude; and this impression has at times become so vivid and so menacing, that it has become repeatedly necessary for the government, even in the present reign, to give it public contradiction.

Up to the time that he was first taught to look to the Tsar as a protector, the moujik had bent the more submissively to his lord, that he had conceived a notion of his power, derived from the extent to which it was exercised upon himself. We have seen nations take a sort of pride in the

magnitude of the despotism from which they suffered—even a people with an incontestible love of independence. The Spaniard is even now ever ready with some approval of bold and violent acts, by declaring that their perpetrator is *mucho hombre*, "every inch a man," just as he was wont to observe that a monarch under similar circumstances was *mucho rey*, or "every inch a king." In a race naturally servile, timid, and yielding, this sort of worship for power, however applied, may therefore easily be understood. But directly the slave-master was interfered with at every turn, and evidence given in a thousand ways, that if his authority remained unbounded over the moujik, he himself was only like the potter's clay before the iron sceptre of the Tsars, all the veneration which he had before inspired reverted to the crown, leaving only a feeling of latent irritation at the galling yoke.

Hitherto his baron had appeared the mightiest individual in the slave's eyes, he was now taught clearly to see him trembling before one more mighty still, one whom his hopes led him to regard as a protector, and in whom at least he found an avenger. On the other hand, the increasing exactions of the crown were made from the baron,

who had to bear from his slaves all the odium of exacting the contributions which directly or indirectly the government squeezed from him.

In the recruitment for the army, on all the lands belonging to private individuals, the proprietor is rated at so many men per cent. upon his slaves. He has to designate those whom he chooses for this hated service, and on him falls the odium of those families from which the recruit is chosen; but the Tsar, by holding out the promise of freedom at the expiration of the term of military service, is only seen in a comparatively amiable light.

The feeling of loyalty and attachment engendered from these causes, is still paramount with the twenty-three millions who linger in private servitude; but with the twenty-one millions and a half of imperial serfs, it has undergone considerable modifications. It partakes, however, even where most deeply rooted, very much more of superstitious awe than of affection. It bears no resemblance to the enthusiastic attachment which is occasionally exhibited in free countries towards popular princes. It has no reference to the individual man, but to his station; and when he dies, is therefore transferred at once, and without regret, to his successor. It is not even sensibly affected by the vices or the

virtues of a sovereign, which die with him,—but is based upon the despotism which endures. You never meet with a peasant, who can distinguish the sovereigns under whose reign he has lived in anything but name. He is alike ignorant and careless of the ferocious insanity of Paul, and of the benevolence of Alexander. Of all who ruled before he himself was born, the names of Peter the Great, and of Ivan the Terrible, alone survive traditionally. The cruelties of the latter—the most sanguinary monster that ever disgraced humanity—cited without reprobation, have earned him this distinction. The ideas which the lower order of Russians entertain of the awful power of their emperor, are such, that they conceive nothing which can resist his authority and command. They have heard, indeed, of foreign states, and of foreign princes, but believe them to be in a state of dependence and vassalage. It is no uncommon thing to hear the travelled peasant, who is the *esprit fort* of his village, whispering in wonder when he sees a *talega* posting by, in which some prisoner is seated beside the field-jager, and suggesting, after he has named the great men of the empire, that it may be the King of Prussia, or of France, or England, sent for to St. Petersburg,

or despatched to Siberia or to the Caucasus, by the emperor's order. This idea is entertained in common both by the private and the imperial serfs; but naturally, a distinction already exists in their feeling towards the government. The private slave in general looks forward with envy to the condition of the emperor's slaves, and he still hopes much from the mighty master in whose name retribution is so often dealt upon his petty tyrants. Hope operates no longer with the imperial serf. He is oppressed by the emperor's own servants, instead of by a private lord; he no longer, therefore, sees in him a protector. Though on the whole his condition is undoubtedly preferable to that of the average of private serfs, he is apt to look only to the peculiar disadvantages of his situation. To be able to appreciate both these and its advantages, let us recapitulate a few of the real differences which exist between the condition of the two classes into which the slave population is divided.

The fate of the private serfs differs as much as the character of their many masters. The vices, the personal inhumanity, the avarice, the necessities, the inattention or absenteeism of the lord, all operate upon the destiny of the slave. According

to law, a slave proprietor can be punished for putting his serf to death,—but only by incarceration in a monastery, even if he have burned him alive, or crucified him; and such horrors have been perpetrated before now;—let us hope, for the sake of those who committed them, in a moment of temporary insanity. But another law forbids any court to receive the evidence of a slave against his master. It owes its origin to an ukase issued in 1767, by the Empress Catherine, which says:—"If a serf, forgetful of the obedience he owes his lord, make any complaint against him, particularly to imperial majesty, both the author of the petition and he presenting it shall be amenable to the punishment which the laws award." This punishment is the infliction of the knout, and exile to Siberia. This ukase has been confirmed by another issued by the Emperor Nicholas in 1828, with a slight modification; so that as the law now stands, (article 577 of that division of the Russian code which treats on serfdom,) it forbids the serf to accuse or give evidence against his master, under penalty of capital punishment, in any but the two following cases,—viz: 1. Treason against the crown. 2. Concealment of the number of his slaves liable to the imperial poll-tax.

As long, therefore, as a master confines his cruelties to his own slaves, without interfering with those of other people, he is practically safe. The law itself is therefore, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, neutralized by this contradictory clause; but if it could even be put into execution, the most barbarous murder of a slave does not receive the punishment due to capital offences, which in Russia is exile to Siberia, and the infliction of the knout. The law thus, in its very theory, does not pretend to give the slave the protection which five-and-thirty years ago was practically extended to the West Indian negro by the legislature of Great Britain. During the administration of Spencer Perceval, on the 8th of May, 1811, the Honourable A. W. Hodge, a member of his Britannic Majesty's Council at Tortola, was executed for the murder of one of his negroes by excessive flogging. The law does not in Russia, even in 1845, render such a retribution possible upon a slave proprietor, under any circumstances. Such punishment as it threatens in the few instances where it is possible for the evidence of freemen to establish the perpetration of the crime, is quite inefficient to deter, in a country where the laws are so easily evaded. Besides this, the proprietor, where a certain dis-

tance removed from a police station, can punish without other legal limitation than the responsibility which falls upon him if his victim dies within three days; and at all times he has a right to send his serfs, male and female, and of any age, as often as he pleases, not for trial, but for correction, to the police authorities, without incurring the remotest risk.

The ukases issued to protect the slave, principally by the Emperor Alexander, are a dead-letter; but if zealously enforced, they would be as inefficient for that purpose as the acts of parliament for the prevention of cruelty to animals unhappily prove to effect their object. Drovers and carters are occasionally fined and imprisoned, but it is doubtful whether the penalties enforced have tended to diminish animal suffering. Men brutalised enough to commit barbarities which come within the act, may indeed become more careful of detection, but will commonly wreak their revenge in the shape of increased cruelty towards the animals to which they attribute their punishment. They know that, like the Russian serf, these poor dumb beasts cannot give evidence.

Practically, therefore, the private serf is life and limb at the disposal of his master, as completely as

slaves have ever been in any country. He can be sold or hired out like a beast of burthen. The law now wills that a certain portion of land must be sold with him, but land is of mere nominal value. The master may remove one or all his peasants for life from one estate to another, though thousands of miles apart. In purchasing a slave, he has, therefore, only to go through the formality of receiving from the former proprietor a few acres with him, of which he soon forgets the possession, and from which he may remove the slave, separating him for ever from his family, and dooming him to perpetual banishment from his home.

The slave, male or female, cannot marry without the permission of the lord;—the law stipulates that they shall not be forced to marry against their inclinations, but does not offer to protect them; and the means of coercion in the power of the masters are so efficient, that resistance to their wishes is unknown. A soured old maid may sometimes be seen, forcing all the handsomest girls in a village to wed the most repulsive objects; at another, an experimental agriculturist will range his male and female slaves by categories, and marry them according to some fanciful theory which he believes will tend most rapidly to the reproduction

of the species. No further respect is paid to the feelings of the father or of the husband, of the daughter or the wife; and there are no purposes, the most infamous, to which the slave is not always liable to be devoted, and frequently applied. The master may at any time send his male slave to Siberia, or for a soldier,—and some he must constantly choose for this service.

Where the law offers little ostensible, and no real protection,—where there is no public opinion, and where the masters only superficially civilized, are plunged in all the vices which have usually marked the decrepitude of society, it may readily be imagined what must often be the condition of their slaves. On the other hand, his lord may be wealthy, benevolent, or sufficiently conscious of his true interests to see the advantages he may derive from his prosperity. In this case, the moujik often derives from his connexion with his master, facilities for acquiring wealth; and with this wealth, which he has learned by a thousand arts to conceal so that it can seldom all be extorted from him by any change of fortune, he sometimes manages to purchase freedom. Being less exposed to the rapacity of the police and government agents than a crown serf, or free trader, he has therefore, under

a wise or good master, in some respects the advantage of them.

It is easier for him to become rich, in a country where riches, or at least competence, appear so easily attainable by the industrious peasant, who enjoys any respite from the habitual extortion of his master, and of the imperial servants, whose double oppression in general weighs so heavily on him. For it cannot be too often repeated, that Russia bears no analogy to those densely peopled countries, in which the superabundance of labour, and the limited channels through which industry can be made available, render existence a painful struggle for a portion of the population.

The Russian only requires not to be cruelly interfered with, to grow affluent. Somewhere about 122 individuals out of every 126 are reduced, on an average, to consume less than six shillings' worth of produce monthly. Whereas, if it were not for the state of servitude in which they are held, and the wretched government which cramps their energies, there is nothing to prevent them from being in the same condition as the inhabitants of the United States, where the labour of an able-bodied man will bring him in a pound a week at the lowest computation.

The greater number of the prosperous traders have grown wealthy through the kindness and protection of their lords, or have thus been enabled to acquire their freedom. There is always, however, for the private slave, this terrible drawback, even under the best of masters,—the uncertainty of life, and the dread of coming into the possession of a cruel or rapacious successor. Of such vital importance is the character of his lord to his serfs, and such is the facility with which, under an indulgent master, they may prosper, that it is by no means uncommon, when an estate which has been well administered passes out of his hands by death or sale, to find them applying to some neighbouring proprietor, of whose humanity to his own people they are convinced, and requesting him to purchase them, on consideration of their furnishing him with the requisite sum.

A similar instance came to the knowledge of the author of these volumes:—A nobleman, with a small estate, but who had behaved with unvarying kindness to his serfs, was waited on by a deputation of the serfs of a vast adjoining domain, then about to be sold, and of which the full value of his own would not have paid a year's rental. They offered to advance him the money to purchase this,—

and of course such an advance from men about to become his bondsmen was a gift. Unhappily, when the negotiation was nearly concluded, he was seized with a violent fit of coughing; it was dreaded that his lungs might be affected, and the opinion of a doctor having confirmed this apprehension, the serfs withdrew their offer. Meanwhile, this people, who had enjoyed for years a state of peace and liberty, which had led to such prosperity, passed with the estate into the hands of an avaricious and eccentric beldame, who on her arrival began by causing several of her people, taken haphazard, to be chastised; to let them know, she said, "that she would not be imposed on, though she was a woman." The second day she amused herself with trying the contents of her English medicine chest upon her slaves, to ascertain the precise effects of each; and beyond this the author knows no more of her inauspiciously commencing reign.

Happiness, enjoyed under any despotism, public or private, is, however, obviously uncertain. The history of an estate in Russia is in this respect a picture of the empire, only that, as besides benevolent intentions, it requires singular talent and energy to produce beneficial results in a realm so extensive,—a good sovereign is a scarcer acci-

dent for the nation, than a good slave-master for the slave.

Now, if we turn to the serfs of the imperial domain, amongst other advantages, they labour under no such painful uncertainty as to the future. They are not subject to be sold from one master to another, since the emperor, though constantly increasing their number by the forfeiture of the mortgaged estates of his nobility, very rarely parts with his slaves to another owner.

The imperial serf is not either liable to the same extensive privations which the private serf endures, nor to the same extent of capricious cruelty of which he is at times the victim. He can more readily obtain leave to move about the empire; and he enjoys some of the advantages of belonging to an extensive and wealthy proprietor,—but then it is of an absentee proprietor, who has abandoned the administration of his overgrown estates to overseers and agents. This comparative exemption from utter misery and unendurable tyranny, which the crown serf to some extent enjoys, is not, however, without exception. The vast and corrupt body which administers this prodigious estate, is sometimes guilty of incredible barbarity and injustice; and the imperial serfs are sometimes decimated by

hunger, as well as those belonging to private individuals,—and to an extent of which the writer of these volumes was not aware, even when he published the "Revelations of Russia." Though it is true that in cases of famine relief is always afforded from the imperial treasury to this population, the sums intended for that purpose seldom reach their destination.

On the whole, however, it is incontestible that the average condition of the imperial is better than that of the private serf; and it may be considered as a conclusive proof thereof, that the great majority of the private serfs would willingly change places with those belonging to the emperor; but then, if you question the crown serf on the subject, in nine cases out of ten he will let you perceive that he looks with envy on the condition of the serf owned by a private master.

He will point out to you the numerous examples of private slaves who have attained to vast wealth, who have succeeded in purchasing, or been gifted with freedom,—all chances of which as an imperial slave he is almost entirely deprived.

And in fact, though the great majority of successful traders are, or have been, in a state of servitude, it is almost invariably in a state of private

servitude that they have attained their prosperity. In point of fact, wherever the crown serf succeeds in obtaining permission to trade, and resorts to a town for that purpose, besides the exactions of the administrators of the imperial domains, he becomes a victim to the extortion of the police and other government servants, who regard it as their undisputed right to turn him to any possible account. The soil is, however, so fertile, that, wherever confining himself to its cultivation he is so fortunate as to be under the direction of overseers who are tolerably reasonable, it is by no means uncommon for the imperial serf to attain considerable agricultural wealth; but in that case the detestable and Machiavelian policy of the crown itself interferes, and proves as pernicious as in other cases the oppression of its agents, for which it may indeed be held responsible, but with which it has no connivance.

Wherever by his industry and intelligence a crown serf has succeeded in acquiring agricultural wealth, converting his hut and his patch of ground into flourishing farms, and having erected valuable buildings, after the lapse of a certain number of years he is suddenly transplanted for life to a distant government; in which case the property

which he has collected, and must leave behind, falls to the use of the imperial domain.

A double advantage is supposed to arise from this injustice: firstly,—the immediate gain derived from this insidious confiscation; whilst, secondly, this proved and industrious labourer in the imperial vineyard is removed to fructify some hitherto unproductive spot. Amongst the higher authorities, this is called taking the honey from the emperor's hives; and the author has heard this iniquitous proceeding highly extolled for its ingenuity, by comparison with the policy of the Turkish divan, which allows its servants to accumulate treasures, and then, through the intermedium of the bowstring, sweeps them all into the treasury of the sultan. "That," say they, "is the old barbarous system of suffocating the bees in the hive; but our emperor takes away the honey without destroying them, and then lets loose his bees to gather fresh." It may appear strange, but such is the force of industrious habit, that after this discouraging experience, these men are really sometimes seen attempting to accumulate property again; but though this is occasionally true with the individual, it is not so with his class, which is impolitically deterred from any general or serious attempt to attain such uncertain prosperity.

The imperial serf is taxed at the stipulated sum of fifteen roubles annually; he is bound to keep the roads in order, and to contribute a portion of his labour to works of public utility; and he receives from the crown for his support ten dsiatines of land to cultivate. He is bound to feed the troops quartered upon him, and to afford means of conveyance for the public service, and is ostensibly awarded payment for the same. Practically, however, he is so much at the mercy of the vast establishment of officials comprised in the administration of the imperial domains, that the annual tax extends to double and treble its avowed amount; he cannot stir from the place of his birth without the dearly purchased permission of these rapacious agents, and he is liable with his family to any corporal punishment it pleases them to inflict, or to banishment to Siberia at their will and pleasure. What he most dreads, however, and what is consequently used as the readiest means of extortion, is being selected for the army, or for the government works. The disgust and horror entertained by the lower order of Muscovites for the military profession, which after a certain period of service frees them from slavery, is so profound and deeply rooted, that it is only fully to

be accounted for, by the innate aversion of this pacific people to everything warlike. Uninviting as may be the prospect of the soldier, it is still strange to see the tenacity with which the peasantry will cling to the most wretched mode of life rather than be enlisted; but their dread of serving in the public works or the manufactories of the crown, is perfectly natural.

When the traveller is shown the mines and canals, or the vast imperial manufactories and iron works,—when he sees the stupendous docks in the ports of the Black Sea and of the Baltic, he is seldom aware of the true condition of the unfortunates by whom they have been erected and are chiefly filled. They are forced labourers, slaves of the imperial domain. It is considered that as they are the emperor's property, they are bound to do the work he wishes done, without remuneration; and they consequently receive only the coarse rations necessary for their support, and the almost nominal pay of the soldier. So far from any encouragement being held out for the zeal they may show, or the proficiency they may attain, they see by experience that the more a workman is valued, the longer and the harder is the toil at which he is kept, and the less his chance of ever

being dismissed to his village; whilst, on the other hand, as it is the habit of the slave to conceal his dexterity, the awkwardness he may show is always supposed to be feigned, and it is only after a long course of cruel treatment that it is believed to be real.

So prejudicial is this iniquitous system to the very interests of these establishments, by destroying all emulation, that it is found that the labour of these imperial serfs, which costs nothing but the value of their coarse food and raiment, is still dearer than that of highly paid workmen in private manufactories kept by foreigners in the empire.

The private serf may hope in some cases to profit by his industry, his skill, and the proficiency he has acquired in various arts; for though his master, in letting him seek employment, commonly raises his *obrock* or annual tax in such proportion to his supposed gains, as at times to absorb them all, still the baron is sometimes reasonable, and more frequently deceived; but the crown serf is debarred from all such prospect.

This incertitude of a proper requital for their labour in the one case, and the certainty in the other, of the value of their services proving rather prejudicial than otherwise to themselves, has rendered it a maxim of a traditonal wisdom

amongst the slaves of both classes, obstinately to conceal their acquirements as much as possible. This notorious habit has accustomed those who have any of these unfortunates committed to their charge, with whose antecedents they are unacquainted, to consider in every case their ignorance and awkardness as the results of ill-will, which a due course of severity may conquer. There is no Russian employed as the superintendant of peasants born and reared far from his own eye, who will not relate to you instances in which, after a due number of inflictions of the lash, some of those committed to his charge did not miraculously find the use of their hands and of their tools; and this of course confirms him in his system, forgetful that ninety-nine times out of a hundred his cruelty has been wasted without result.

Amongst the many superficial remarks made by travellers on the Russian empire, it has frequently been observed, how wonderfully efficacious is, after all, the violence used towards the peasant. "If the master wishes the serf to become a tailor, a carpenter, a shoemaker,—say these philosophers, he is set to work at once, flogged when he fails and then flogged and flogged again, and it is truly marvellous how singularly this course of

proceeding stimulates the inventive genius of the Russian, for he becomes in the briefest possible space of time what his master wishes. Hence they frequently proceed to insinuate that such treatment is in some measure excusable towards so singular a people, or at least this is the inference too often drawn from their statement; whereas, in point of fact, it should only tend to prove how the long injustice of their superiors has taught the slave class to conceal the skill and ingenuity by which they can never hope to profit, and how a further cruelty and injustice is practised to surprise the secret of this concealment, indiscriminately on those who are innocent or guilty of it.

This obstinate ill-will of the moujiks, which severity does not always conquer, is, as it may readily be imagined, exceedingly hurtful to the very interests of their owners. Let us take one instance out of millions, which will show at once the cause for hopeless discouragement in the crown serf, and the prejudicial operation of this feeling on the interests of the government. An Englishman employed in a certain imperial manufactory, informed the author that he served the Russian government by contract. In England he was one of the chief workmen in a similar establishment, earning by

hard labour a high salary for an artisan. He had acquired that limited but practical knowledge of a given branch which mere theory will not supply, and he was consequently offered an engagement in Russia. As is usual in such cases with skilful workmen highly paid in England, he refused to go to a distant country until a tempting offer was made him; and once in Russia, he acted merely as superintendant in his department. His sole utility consisted in his practical knowledge of the mixture of certain ingredients; and he pointed out to the author one of his workmen, a crown slave, whom he frankly confessed to be as well acquainted with the art as himself, but added that the slave would never avow it, being assured from the example of several of his companions, that the only result would be his retention till a later age in the manufactory. The government thus paid the Englishman between three and four hundred pounds per annum uselessly, and the poor serf saw a foreigner receive this sum whilst aware that his own proficiency in the art would never procure him more than the coarse black bread and fermented cabbage on which he lived, or tend to exempt him from the rigid military discipline which in the imperial works and establishments adds its irksome restraints to the

monotony of a manufactory life, and to the toil of the labourer.

For it will, of course, excite no surprise, that military habits, dress, and organisation should be extended to these workmen under a government which clothes in the significant uniform, and distinguishes by military rank, such varied classes, from the members of the holy synod of the Russian church down to the lamplighters.

When we see this system applied—with a vigour increasing every reign, and never so far exerted as in the present—to a people, of which the great bulk, that is to say, the whole Muscovite portion of it, is by nature peculiarly disinclined to everything military, one is tempted to believe that the inspiring thought of the government policy must have been to conquer this repugnance, on the principle that habit becomes a second nature. The obvious result, however, has been, instead of giving birth to any taste for the pomp and circumstance of war, through this martial administration of its pacific subjects, to induce a more profound disgust amongst them for everything therewith connected. When we examine the usually abject condition either of the private or of the crown serf in his native village, we are apt to imagine that once sunk

into such misery and degradation, he must be tolerably insensible to a little further restraint; but this is by no means the case. The loss of liberty may produce the most humble submission to restraints more irksome still, but it is evident that the slave enjoys every remnant of freedom left him even by sufferance, and keenly feels its deprivation. The serf in his village, though exposed to perpetual tyranny,—though liable to every injury in his person, his interests, his feelings, and affections, still commonly enjoys some degree of liberty and peace, however uncertain; but directly he is incorporated in any of the institutions organised for the imperial service, his life becomes one monotonous period of restraint without hope or alleviation.

The imperial serfs, whilst their numbers have augmented, find their condition becoming in two ways harder. Firstly, the increased charges of the government, arising chiefly from the preposterous augmentation of its military force, obliges it to oppress more heavily its own as well as the private serfs; whilst the progress of luxury amongst the officials who administer them, and their increasing numbers, have forced them to wring more out of them than was formerly believed practicable.

The science of extracting the full amount of men and means from a population, was comparatively undeveloped before the French revolution; but this is one of the discoveries of civilisation which Russia has perfectly appropriated: secondly, the increase of the military force, of the government manufactories and works, and the establishment of military colonies, to all of which they are called personally to contribute, inspires them with disgust and dread, whilst the organization of every department with which they come in contact, assumes a vexatious minuteness from which there is daily less possibility of escape. On the whole, therefore, the crown serf, whilst full of awe at the power of the emperor, regards him with far less attachment than his brother slave.

It has been said elsewhere, that partial rebellions of the serfs, when local oppression becomes unendurable, are frequent throughout the empire. On these occasions, like the camel goaded into fury, they turn on their tyrants, and putting them to cruel deaths, burn and destroy and ravage.

In the course of the present year, one of the distinguished family of Apraxin perished in a similar manner. The fact was generally known, not on account of his great name, but because it

enabled his wife, then residing in Austria, and who had long in vain sued for a divorce, to marry; and it is never but through some such casualty that these Jacqueries come to light. It is, however, remarkable that out of about a dozen revolts of private serfs, of which the author received accounts from personal testimony, in almost every case, the peasants, in the midst of their excesses, always spoke with respect of the emperor, and often were excited by their leaders in his name to fresh acts of outrageous violence. But, on the other hand, amongst the imperial serfs these rebellions are also frequent, though in a like manner local, and produced by the unendurable oppression of their overseers. If fewer instances come to the knowledge of those who seek for information in these matters, considering the additional facilities for suppressing it in such cases, there is much reason to believe that these revolts occur as commonly amongst the imperial, as amongst the private slaves.

The conduct of the insurgents is usually in both cases the same, with this remarkable distinction however, that in every one of these rebellions, from that dangerous outbreak in the military colonies on the banks of the Volchova, towards the close of Alexander's reign, down to those of most

recent occurrence, the imperial slaves, when once roused, show none of that superstitious awe for the sovereign, which with their fellow slaves survives even when they have furiously broken through all other trammels.

An officer who witnessed the revolt of the military colonies in the government of Novogorod, and who had some reason to remember them, having narrowly escaped being boiled alive, informed the author, that when he made an appeal to the rebels in the emperor's name, they tore the portrait of his imperial majesty from the walls, and ignominiously trampled it under foot. The image of the saint which hangs in the corner of every Russian apartment, was, however, still respected.

But if there be a marked distinction in the feeling with which the two classes of slaves regard their sovereign or his government, there is also a difference equally significant between the great mass of uneducated Russians, who are filled with awe at the imperial power, and the few for whom the *prestige* of its omnipotence is destroyed. This is chiefly observable amongst the soldiery. The few veterans who have survived the campaigns against the Republic and Napoleon, the scanty remnant of the last Turkish campaign and the last but

one in Poland—may be distinguished by the very much less respectful tone in which they speak of the imperial authority.

Usually, the soldiers, like the peasantry, are full of deferential awe; they regard their emperor as the master of the earth, and appear to view in the light of rashness—or, one might almost say of blasphemy—any opposition to an order emanating from him; but wherever they have had the opportunity of distinctly seeing that his power is limited to Russia, and that there are vast nations beyond exempt from his rule,—where they have seen his authority braved with success by rebellious Poles and contemptuous Turks, their confidence in his infallibility is destroyed; and then their veneration, being based rather on fear than on affection, undergoes a singular modification.

CHAP. III.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS, AND THE SLAVE POPULATION.

Rebellion of the crown slaves and private slaves—Probabilities of a social, or slave war—Conduct of the slaves in the rebellions of Pugatcheff, and during the French invasion of 1812—Admiral Tchitchagoff and the Emperor.

THE frequently recurring insurrections of the serfs of all descriptions have, it is true, as it has been already stated, merely a local character. The insurrection of the crown serfs in the military colonies on the banks of the Volchova, towards the close of Alexander's reign, in which his favourite, the tyrannical Arakcheief, their founder, narrowly escaped with his life, though it created considerable alarm in the imperial cabinet at the time, could scarcely be deemed an exception. This revolt derived its sole importance from pointing out so vividly the danger to the Tsars, of the gigantic plan, of which these colonies were a first experiment,

for rendering the whole empire one vast military establishment,—a plan from that moment virtually abandoned.

These partial rebellions are the result of desperation unmixed with the faintest hope. When oppression is pushed too far, Siberia and the knout have not terrors enough by comparison with the sufferings the slaves endure, to deter them from the satiation of revenge. Beyond this the insurgents never seem to aspire. In the military colonies above alluded to, the habitual severity of Araktcheief's administration, would probably not have produced this outbreak, without the natural horror and disinclination of the peasantry to the military nature of their new organisation; for it must be observed, that though the cavalry colonies in the south have since attained to considerable prosperity, that they are composed not of Muscovites, but chiefly of Ruthenians, who have a marked predilection for everything warlike, which their Muscovite brethren dread and detest so much that they make little, if any, distinction between being enlisted, or exiled for life to Siberia.

But though there has never been, and probably never will be, anything like a spontaneous attempt

made by the serfs to shake off the yoke of servitude, it becomes a very different question how they might act if supported by some external agency sufficiently powerful to neutralise their belief in the temporal omnipotence of their Tsars.

During the last century, the serfs have been thus twice tempted; firstly in the rebellion of Pugatcheff in the last generation; and secondly, in the memory of the present, during the French invasion.

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The second instance was that afforded in the invasion of Russia by Napoleon in 1812.

There are few historical events of importance, near our own time, of which impressions so erroneous have remained upon the public mind, or which have retained so long the colouring given by the passions and the prejudices of the moment.

Constituting an episode of profound interest in the long struggle between France and England, it could not easily be then regarded in this country with due impartiality. The example of popular patriotism in the Peninsula, where an indomitable people continued obstinately to assert its independence with ever vanquished armies, led the English

public to conceive an ideal analogy of character between the Russians and the Spaniards.

The magnitude of the conqueror's reverses, equal to the greatness of his previous fortunes, could be traced to one dramatic incident—the destruction of the holy city of the invaded empire—on which the startling change appeared to hinge. With the example of Saragossa fresh in its recollection, the English public jumped at once to the conclusion that a patriotic sacrifice of unequalled greatness had led deservedly to the unparalleled results which followed. The fact that the Russian government not only denied in the moss strenuous manner all participation in the burning of Moscow, but long after continued to attribute it to the French, did not prevent the English from saddling on the inhabitants of that city the glory of having by its voluntary conflagration saved the empire.

Notwithstanding the disavowal published by Rostopchin, of its having originated even with the government, and the glaring falsity of the destruction of the capital with the knowledge or concurrence of the inhabitants, this misconception has become a popular error, confirmed as it was by the great romancer, whose fictions were so full of his-

tory, his histories so full of fiction,—and consecrated by the genius of Byron, who apostrophises the burning city as "sublimest of volcanoes," adding :—

> "To this the soldier lent his kindling match,
> To this the peasant gave his cottage thatch,
> To this the merchant flung his hoarded store,
> The prince his hall—and Moscow was no more!"

The unaccountable continuance of this delusion will serve to show with how little correctness the important passage of history comprised in the invasion of Russia in 1812, has been investigated. The readiness of the English to be deceived, the misrepresentations of the Russian government, and the want of confidence in the subsequent refutations of the French,—deserved, by the utter want of veracity and probity to which the world had grown accustomed in their statements about this period,—have all tended conjointly to confound truth and falsehood in the page of popular history relating to the singular events which marked this stirring epoch.

A very remarkable circumstance has been thus lost sight of—one which is of no common import, if we are to draw from the past any augury for the future,—I mean the disposition of mind of the

serf population when Napoleon's army crossed the frontier.

On the 18th of July, 1812, the Emperor Alexander, finding his armies so separated that they could afford each other no mutual support, judged it too late to depend upon his military forces alone for the safety of his empire. He therefore addressed a proclamation dated from Polotzk, to the people at large, announcing the invasion of his territory, and making such an appeal to the popular sympathies as he hoped might invest the contest with a national character. The effect of this solemn and widely spread document was, at the outset, far from answering the views of its promulgator. It made known, indeed, in the remotest villages, the threatened approach of the French armies; but far from inspiring any patriotic indignation amongst the serf population, it was received with sullen apathy, or with positive satisfaction. A report seemed to gain ground amongst them, even in governments distant from the frontier, that the French intended to free them from slavery. In the environs of St. Petersburg, it was commonly said amongst the peasantry, that Napoleon was not their enemy, and that he would free them. In the government of Novogorod, a landed proprietor re-

lates, that, on returning home to his village, he was received with positive disrespect by his serfs; they had neglected to perform all the tasks he had left them, with the exception of one individual, who had been taught the trade of a bootmaker. He brought back one pair to his lord, in a state of intoxication, and returned the remainder of the leather, saying,—"Take care of it; the French are coming; you will have to make the next pair for me." A German land-steward in the government of Moscow, saw reason to dispatch his wife and family to the city, though he had been unremitting in his efforts to paint the French army in the most sombre colours to the serfs of the estate.

Even in the most remote districts, wherever any result was produced by this announcement of the French invasion, it was threatening and unfavourable; but in those parts of the country situated nearer to the Polish frontier, a most dangerous fermentation was evidently progressing in the minds of the slave population.

The enfranchisement of the serfs in that portion of Poland which constituted the grand duchy of Warsaw, had inspired the Lithuanian peasantry with the confident hope that a similar boon would

be extended to them, now that Lithuania was added to the Polish confederation. From the Polish frontier these ideas were transmitted by the enthusiastic peasantry to their Russian neighbours, and spread so rapidly that there can be no doubt that millions of Russian serfs were only awaiting the arrival of the French to rise against their masters.

The unvarying testimony of all those who were at this period inhabiting amidst the peasantry, in any portion of the country comprised between the Dnieper and the Moscowa rivers, establishes beyond a doubt the universal prevalence of this disposition on the part of the slaves. Let us take the evidence of two Scotchmen, filling the situations of *oupravitels*, or land-stewards, on two distinct estates at more than a hundred and fifty miles distance from each other. In the one nearest to the frontier, as soon as the French army was known to be advancing, the serfs, who (according to the steward's own account) were unusually well treated, by comparison with their neighbours, ceased to work. There did not ensue the same scene of destruction as on the two neighbouring estates, the slaves confining themselves to an insolent intrusion into the best rooms of the manor house, where they emptied the lord's cellar, tore up the fruit,

ripe and unripe, from the hot-houses and pineries, and smashed the costly mirrors to get fragments of the glass. No one dared interfere with them; they said that the French were coming, and that all their master's property would be their own. Some even understood that they were literally to change places with their barons,—the barons becoming serfs in their turn. On the other estate, in the environs of Mojaisk, a fellow-steward of the other Scotchman was killed in the attempt to keep the moujiks in order. After plundering and burning the house, the peasantry took to the woods, or dispersed amongst the neighbouring villages. Little more than a month after, the tide of popular prejudice had so far turned against the invaders, that the very day after the evacuation of the field of Borodino by the Russian army, the greater number of these peasants had joined a fanatical body, which boldly attacked the vanguard of the French under the viceroy of Italy, as it was advancing upon Rusa. They were dispersed by a few cannon shots.

On the other hand, no sooner had the French army passed Witepsk, than the Russian serfs flocked from beyond Welij to their out-posts, bringing with them, to deliver into their hands, the lords and oupravitels of the estates which they

inhabited. Napoleon by no means encouraged this tendency. It is probable that there was some truth in his reply to an address from the French senate, wherein he stated :—"I could have armed a great portion of the Russian population against the remainder, by proclaiming the enfranchisement of the serfs. I was asked to do so by the population of many villages, but on considering the debased and barbarous condition of the Russian peasantry, I could not think of adopting a measure which would have been the signal for putting to death and torturing whole families."

He could not but be aware, not only from the example afforded in Pugatcheff's rebellion, but from what was passing under his own eyes, that such a step would have been applying the torch of the incendiary to the whole social system of the empire; and it is quite natural that, whilst confident of success, he should have preferred a conquest of which the value was not diminished by its being in a state of political conflagration.

Long before the destruction of Moscow, this terrible means of aggression was not only out of his power, but had been turned against him.

If we examine attentively Napoleon's history, we find him, towards the latter part of his career,

animated by a different spirit from that which at first inspired him, or at least having entirely changed his means of action. At the outset of his conquests he not only struck into the path which the French republic had opened, but pushed forward in it with a degree of energy which led to unparalleled results.

The great power of the republic was derived from moral means, though it neglected none of a material nature conducive to success. Human thought and opinion, the supposed championship of a new and better order of things against all abuses, acted as a mighty lever. When grasped in the unswerving hand of a successful leader, this tremendous engine, which had never been brought into play before, produced effects, which reduced the ordinary struggles of nations and of princes to comparative insignificance. The history of Europe had presented no situation even faintly analogous since the great movement of the crusades. In other wars, the fears, the prejudices, and the vanities of races had been feebly acted on; but the example of the French revolution appealed to the most stormy passions of mankind.

A battle won by the French armies was no longer a mere military triumph, but an event

which trumpet-tongued confirmed the authenticity of their mission; and for once, the roar of cannon and the clang of arms, instead of striking terror into nations, roused the palpitating hearts of millions to fallacious hopes.

The French republic had announced that it would break through all fetters, but when victory gave it up the keys, it kept them for its own account; and by a just and speedy retribution, it was bound in turn. Nevertheless, the oppressed throughout Europe had not yet perceived, what France herself has been so slow to recognise,—confounding as she still does her glories and ignominy,—so that her name continued like an incantation which stirred nations to their profoundest depths long after she had become the tool of an individual ambition. Napoleon became the incarnation, in their eyes, of that revolution from which the freedom of the world was expected; and blinded by the hatred to which centuries of wrongs had given rise, they continued to applaud in him, the avenger, humbling those who had so long enthralled them. It was of this moral element, which had never yet been to the same extent at the command of any conqueror, that he profited, to attain results which were without a parallel. Great as he was

undoubtedly, he was still too little for his fortunes. The Italian hero, like the French nation, had been placed in a position more proud than ever a people or an individual had reached before. The French republic had in its hands the freedom of the world, and sacrificing to its ephemeral aggrandisement, the noblest part a nation had ever been called to play, it sank into a despotism. Napoleon, when the most astounding successes, based on the public prejudice and opinion, had raised him to a station no human being had ever filled before, when in the tyrant mankind could only see the tyrant tamer,—the man of destiny, who trod upon the necks of princes, and made his footstool of the proudest thrones—at that very moment of unprecedented triumph, he proved as much below the mission which the world persisted in attributing to him, as the republic before him had proved to that which it had neglected. When the emperor cast ungratefully aside the loving daughter of the people, the authoress of his first success, to take to his bed the scion of a degenerate and conquered dynasty,—from that time forward, moved by a common-place pride and vanity, he became a vulgar despot. He was no longer the champion of a new and promising order of things,—but the

proselyte of the old, which his very victories had so far discredited; and from that fatal period, contented with the material means at his disposal, he learned gradually to neglect—perhaps to dread the *prestige* and opinion which had made him a giant; and placing his sole trust in the number and brute strength of his battalions, it was beneath the brute strength of banded numbers that he succumbed at length.

After inflicting a series of terrible defeats on two of the three great powers, spoliators of Poland; by the treaty of Tilsit in 1807, he had established the grand duchy of Warsaw. Here already, instead of restoring to independence all that portion of Poland which he had obliged Prussia to disgorge, he gave up to Russia the circle of Bialystok. Nevertheless, the restoration of the grand duchy, and the establishment of a constitution, which by its first article abolished slavery for ever, led men to forget in the greatness of what he had done, that which he had left undone.

In 1809, having forced Austria not only to an ignominious peace, but to give in illegitimate marriage the hand of a princess of the proudest house on earth, to the son of a private gentleman of Corsica,—for by the Church of Rome his second

marriage was never recognised,—he had stripped that empire in its turn of a large portion of the territory it had acquired as its share of the iniquitous partition of Poland under Catherine.

His will having become a law in Europe, the Poles had hoped, that, unfettered by political necessities, he would have restored the ancient limits of the republic,—but they were deceived; for though he added New Gallicia and the district of Zamosk to the grand duchy, he again gave over to Russian domination a portion of Podolia.

From that time forward, his policy became the narrow policy of those absolute monarchs, who staked cities, provinces, and nations, throwing them in to trim the balance of negotiation, like inanimate things, without regard to their feelings or their wishes. After the example of those princes over whom he had achieved stupendous triumphs, strong in their neglect of an agency, which in his turn he now neglected, every national and independent feeling—every liberal tendency very soon became as distasteful to him as if born in the purple.

As soon as preparations were known to be making for the invasion of Russia in 1812, the enthusiastic hopes of every part of Poland were raised to the highest pitch. There was no sacrifice sixteen

millions of Poles were not ready to make. Lithuania having been added to the grand duchy of Warsaw, the diet, under the presidence of Prince Adam Czartoryski, declared the independence of all the Polish provinces. Never, perhaps, were the fervent hopes and the enthusiastic wishes of a people more truly expressed than in the speech of the deputation sent by the diet to Napoleon at Wilna.—"Only say, sire, that the Polish kingdom exists," exclaimed Wybinski, its mouth-piece, "and this decree will become for the world a reality. We are sixteeen millions of Poles, and amongst us there is not one whose arms, whose life, and whose fortune is not at the disposal of your imperial majesty. There is no imaginable sacrifice we shall dread, if it lead to the restoration of our country, from the Dwina to the Dniester, from the Borysthenes to the Oder. That one word will devote to your majesty, all our efforts, all our hearts."

But this magic word, the emperor, now the son-in-law of the Austrian Cæsar, would not speak. His reply was cold and evasive, his promises were vague. His ambassador at Warsaw took care to declare that his master did not wish to make the war national, and counted only on his armies.

It will therefore be readily understood, when Napoleon thus cast aside with a disdainful aversion, in the thorough spirit of a prince "by right divine," the mighty moral weapon almost forced upon him in Poland, how he should have neglected to resort to its use on the Russian territories, which he was so confident of appropriating by the sole intermedium of his marshalled hosts.

The means which he so impolitically neglected, was, as it is well known, used against him; and from Moscow to Leipzic, the popular feeling roused in Russia and Germany by long baffled adversaries, changed his military failures into irreparable reverses. The tide of opinion which had helped to carry him to successes far beyond those to which any other conqueror had ever attained, thus turned to overwhelm him.

But though Napoleon damped the patriotic ardour of the Poles, and discouraged the tendency which the Russian serfs exhibited to make his invasion of their country the opportunity of a social war, it must not be forgotten that he could never have entertained the insane idea of giving rise to a gratuitous difficulty, by enlisting against his armies the religious prejudices of the invaded people. There can be no doubt but that his instructions to

all his generals were, (as it has been so often asserted,) to respect them with the utmost care. It was, however, through the intermedium of these prejudices, that the imperial agents and the Russian nobles contrived to turn the predilections of the serfs in favour of the French, into deadly and fanatical hatred. We have seen the peasantry of an estate raised against their lord in favour of the supposed liberators,—a few weeks after led blindly to attack them as desecrators of their churches, when the defeated armies of the Tsar had withdrawn before their eyes.

To attain this result, considerable art was used by the Russian generals, and a fatal want of forbearance on the part of the French crowned it with success. The Russian commanders, as they retired before the French, burned cities, villages, and churches, and carefully spread the report as they retreated beyond, that this was the work of the invaders. In propagating this rumour, they were cordially aided by the proprietors.

It has been said, that the old nobility, when Napoleon approached the frontier, were determined to use this opportunity to regain their ancient power; and it is even averred, that they were headed by Rostopchin, the governor of Moscow.

The demonstration of feeling made by their slaves, as the French approached, menaced them, however, with so serious a danger, that they were glad unreservedly to make common cause with their autocrat.

The effect of this destruction of villages and churches attributed to the French, was partially to indispose the peasantry, who sometimes fled at their approach. On the other hand, the French, exasperated at finding hamlets empty or in flames when they arrived, very soon began in reality to destroy and plunder; and as the churches afforded the richest spoil, they were the least respected.

If the French armies had been what is vulgarly called "sufficiently in hand," and had scrupulously abstained from any violence, neither the peasantry nor the clergy would have taken a part in the struggle, which very soon assumed the appearance of a religious war.

In this respect Napoleon laboured under peculiar disadvantages. The army of four hundred thousand men with which he opened his campaign, was a motley assembly of troops of all nations, from the shores of the Baltic to the extremities of Italy. The French, and best disciplined portion of this force, had been accustomed ever since the wars of

the republic, to a system of foraging, which induced habits of plunder, from which they were never afterwards reclaimed.

The prospect of prize-money, or of plunder, is well known to have, from its very uncertainty, attraction for those who lead a military life, far above what many times its value of stipulated pay can offer; and the best of troops are easily led to practise any sort of extortion when they can legitimatise it in their own estimation by that specious name.

Now, in the armies of the French empire, the officers, all raised from the same rank as their men, were not only unwilling to restrain, but all animated, from high to low, with the same spirit as the soldiers. However strict the orders of their imperial chief, they were only too glad to avail themselves of the pretext which was offered them; and the clergy and the peasantry, at first alarmed by insidious reports of the incendiary and sacrilegious practices of the French, were soon aroused by their reality.

This unhappy tendency to violence and *brigandage*, of which the wars of that period offer so many examples, from commanders-in-chief downwards, has never been stigmatised or acknowledged by

French writers in any of the campaigns in which it was most indisputably evinced. It is not, therefore, extraordinary, that they should pass over in silence the share it had in arming against them the Russian peasantry. The conduct of French officers in this respect, after they had crossed the hostile frontier, may be judged from their behaviour whilst still on the friendly territory of Poland. The Poles, who have reaped so large a share of the glories of France, and who are indissolubly attached to them by so many sympathies of historic association and analogy of character, bear painful testimony to the prevalence of this propensity in the officers of the imperial armies. Even in Poland, where all the accounts of the French are unanimous as to the friendliness of their reception by its enthusiastic inhabitants, it is related by the Poles, that in the houses where these military visitants were quartered, they commonly carried off the silver forks and spoons; whilst, singularly enough, they disdained to accept the value of their meal, and placed a florin beneath their plates to pay for it. Amongst other instances, a marshal of France with his officers was invited by the bishop of Pultusk to a banquet: all the plate in the environs, to the amount of more than thirty thousand pounds in

value, was collected to do honour to their guests, who, when the repast was over, coolly appropriated it to themselves. The histories of this campaign are mute as to these occurrences, but France and England are unhappily filled with Polish emigrants, who can substantiate these and many similar facts.

Though it may be perfectly true that Smolensko, Dorogobui, Wiasma, Gjat, Moscow, and hundreds of villages were burned by the Russian authorities, it was through occular demonstration of the incendiary violence, and the sacrilegious pillage of the French, that the feeling of the serfs was changed towards them; and they were soon led to attribute the conflagration of their cities to those whom they had seen destroying their hamlets.

All ready on the first approach of the French to rise against their lords, and setting at defiance even their Tsar, when for the first time a power more extensive than his own appeared likely to afford them shelter,—their ardour was in the first place damped by finding no encouragement from the invader; and these hopes being blasted, the imprudence of the French commanders, or their want of control over their forces, sufficed to change the favourable feeling entertained towards them into fanatic hatred, with a rapidity which character-

ises such revulsions amongst uncultivated masses. Then, it is true that they made desperate and successful efforts against the very armies to which, on their first appearance, they had brought their masters bound hand and foot, as a peace-offering.

But the war, though it thus became national, assumed a religious, not a patriotic aspect.

Already at the battle of Borodino, the popular spirit had been roused by the only incentive which has ever been found to operate upon the Muscovites. It was the first fight in which Napoleon showed a want of moral resolution, the last in which the since degenerated Russian armies proved worthy of their actions under Suwarow, Romantzow, and the leaders of the philosophic Catherine's school. These energetic and unscrupulous generals had understood, that fanaticism alone could inspire to combat, masses of men, naturally timid, and who had nothing to combat for,—that no imposition whereby they might increase it, was too gross for their barbarous credulity. Somewhat of their spirit still lingered amongst the superior officers who had served beneath their orders; for though Kutusoff, the commander-in-chief, was inferior even to his German competitors, having no merit but that of resolution to bring matters to the issue of a

battle, full advantage was taken of the religious stimulus by which the soldiers and the peasantry were animated. At this period, incredible as it may seem, the belief which Suwarow had instilled into his men was prevalent amongst the soldiers, and the recently embodied slaves were persuaded that those killed in fighting would resuscitate.

The battle of Borodino, one of the most bloody modern history records,—before whose carnage the slaughter even of Waterloo sinks into insignificance, —was as glorious to the valour of the French, and to the obstinacy of the Muscovites, as discreditable to the leaders of both armies. Kutusoff's generalship was worthy, on that occasion, of his subsequent blunders; and Napoleon, for the first time, as it is well known, hesitated to engage his reserves; thus leaving his victory incomplete and barren. On the side of the Russians, the reserve on the rear of the left wing of their line of battle, under Tutchkoff, was chiefly composed of these scarce disciplined bands of peasantry, in their grey homespun clothing. Prince Poniatowski, at the head of the fifth corps of the French army, had orders to turn the Russian line by advancing along the old Smolensk road, which skirts the woods bounding the field of Borodino, on the French

right and the Russian left. He was here met by Tutchkoff with his militia. Whilst the Russian line, defended by redoubts (as at Pultava), was being slowly beaten back in front by the rest of the French army, these embodied peasants, who the day before had each embraced a holy image from Smolensk miraculously saved from the French, were moved forward in column after column, signing the cross and rushing blindly on the danger. By degrees it is true they were cut to pieces, and pursued along the road to Smolensk; but they resisted so obstinately and so long that the Russian line of battle had already been pushed before the French beyond the point at which Poniatowski could have taken them in the rear, if he had not been so long delayed.

Of this militia no prisoners were made; like the soldiers of Suwarow's armies, they signed the cross, and in the hope of resurrection, refused to ask for quarter.

This battle of Borodino, which opened to the French the road to Moscow, was claimed as a victory in the private dispatches of Kutusoff, of whom a Russian ex-general writes as follows, in his memoirs, destined to be published at his death: —"By the same courier arrived the important

intelligence of the victory of Borodino, of which the result was, to make the Russian army retreat hastily through Moscow. That Kutusoff should have been shameless enough to write this falsehood to his sovereign, to gain his marshal's baton, proves only effrontery; but that he should have deceived two commanders-in-chief, whom it was important to enlighten, so as to enable them to determine on ulterior operations, speaks at once as to the rank which ought to be assigned him as a leader."

Nevertheless, this version has been adopted by the Russians. The Emperor Nicholas, in the futile hope of inspiring his army with a passion for military glory, celebrates it as a victory, and has since given a sham representation of the battle, on the very field on which it was fought; altering many of its episodes, in the spirit of the painter in the fable, who designed the man getting the better of the lion.

The French, who should ridicule this useless comedy, appeared peculiarly outraged to see the Duke of Leuchtenberg, son of the gallant Eugene Beauharnois, and husband to the Princess Marie, daughter of the Emperor Nicholas, commanding that portion of the Russian army which in the sham fight was to represent the defeated French.

But though, after this battle, the rising hatred of the serfs to the French was evinced on several occasions, the population of Moscow was deceived by the pretended victory of Kutusoff, and by the assurance of Rostopchin, the governor. Count Rostopchin, on the 11th, declared by proclamation that Prince Kutusoff "would defend Moscow to the last drop of his blood;" at the same time taking most stringent measures to prevent the escape of the fugitive citizens, whose flight might have spread a panic. On the 13th, Kutusoff, with his army, and with ten thousand wounded, entered the holy city. It was now no longer possible to conceal the truth; but thus, at the eleventh hour, its innumerable inhabitants, in the midst of the inevitable confusion which ensued, could barely save themselves; abandoning, in the majority of instances, all that they could not carry on their persons. On the 14th, at mid-day, Murat's vanguard was at the Mojaisk gate. On the same day, Napoleon entered the Kremlin, which was feebly defended by a handful of the mob;—and it was scarcely occupied before the fire broke out. As to this conflagration, there is one point on which there is no diversity of opinion amongst those who have made it the subject of investigation.

It is undoubted that Moscow was not destroyed either by its inhabitants, or with their knowledge or concurrence.

It is the opinion of the inhabitants, even to the present day, that the French themselves set fire to it. The Russian government, for years after, gave this version of the occurrence. Kutusoff, with his army, and an immense rabblement which had fled the city or gathered from the environs, ventured on a dangerous flank march, of which the only object was, to rouse their animosity by leading them for thirty miles within sight of the conflagration, which was carefully pointed out as the work of its sacrilegious occupants. Rostopchin, so far from attributing it to the inhabitants, denies all participation in the event, even for himself or for the government. The fire undoubtedly originated with the criminals let loose by Rostopchin before evacuating the city; but whether executed by his instigation or not there is no means of distinctly ascertaining. It is possible that the governor's sole motive in liberating them may have been the one avowed, of embittering and rendering national the war, by exciting the populace to attack the French armies, thus animating it to reprisals.

As to the character of Rostopchin, whom Sir

Walter Scott exalts into a hero, the following anecdote, of which the authenticity has been confirmed to the author by the highest authority, will of itself suffice to stamp its barbarity in the estimation of every western reader.

On the 14th of September, Count Rostopchin being about to evacuate the city, caused the prisoners and criminals to be brought before him. After telling the latter that they were to expiate their crimes by serving their country, he set them at liberty. He then ordered a Russian, named Verechtchaguinn, who had been arrested on the charge of translating into Russ, for one of his friends, a German newspaper which contained accounts of the movements of the French armies, to be put to death, and had him literally hacked to death with sabres before his eyes.

At all events, it is on all hands admitted, that it was not the result of a popular sacrifice. The Russian people never destroyed even a hamlet, unless accidentally, of all the thousands which were burned. Even at the present day, far from glorying in the suggestion, they are rather disposed to be offended at it. But since the people had no share in a step which proved so decisive, let us examine what credit was due to the authorities for it, if really originating with them.

In the first place, when Kutusoff retreated from the field of Borodino, he must have known, and Rostopchin should have known, that he could not venture on another battle to defend the capital. If destruction had been then decided on and announced, there would have been still time for its inhabitants to escape with all their goods and chattels; instead of which, they were so taken by surprise, that even the wealthy could not save their very wardrobes. If, therefore, it had been a means of defence, as well calculated as it proved effective, it was absurdly carried into execution, because with needless loss; but in fact, its fortunate results arose from a circumstance which it was most impossible to foresee—the irresolution and inactivity of one of the most active and resolute of men. If Napoleon, instead of wasting a month in the ruined city, had retired at the end of ten days or a fortnight, he would have found ample provisions wherewith to winter in Minsk and Wilna; and in that case, Moscow became a fruitless sacrifice.

Thus, whilst public opinion in England attributed the terrible disasters of Napoleon's army to the sagacious foresight of the Russian generals, and to the patriotic spirit of the Russian people, who had

destroyed their villages and cities rather than let them fall into the power of the invaders,—in Russia itself, this destruction, laid at the door of the French, was used as a means to rouse the nation against them; and the incapacity of their military chiefs was so generally recognised by the higher classes, that it is commonly said amongst them to this day, that the French were not vanquished by General Kutusoff, but by General *Morosoff* (Frost).

As to the Scythian mode of defence which the Russian leaders afterwards set forth as premeditated, it was not even justified by success; because this success arose partly from accident, and partly from the faults committed by the French emperor and his commanders, over which the defenders of the empire had no control, and which it was impossible for them to foresee.

It required that Napoleon should decline all appeal to the serf population,—that his commissariat should have been so badly organised,—that his army should have shown so little forbearance towards the natives,—that he should at the battle of Borodino, for the first time, have shown moral timidity; at Moscow, for the first time, unaccountable inactivity; and in addition, that the elements themselves should, against every calcula-

tion of chances, have proved so hostile. These were eventualities on which it required nothing less than second-sight to reckon. But let us see how these generals, who aspire to such miraculous foresight in their combinations acted, when ill-fortune and ill-conduct had united to overwhelm this man of hitherto indomitable fortunes.

It is necessary for that purpose briefly to investigate an episode of this war, which, though not the most important, will be immortalised in history as the most eventful—one which may be compared to the breaking up by the waves of a mighty vessel long since stranded. I allude to the retreat from Moscow, when a month had been wasted in it, through a ruined country, and a population rendered hostile, with a hungry army, in a bitter frost.

It is the less necessary to apologise for this digression, that it will give the author an opportunity of doing justice to an adoptive countryman, to whom much wrong has been done, not only by the Russian authorities, but by one of our most celebrated writers, and towards whom the author himself has been guilty of some injustice in a preceding work—an injustice rather of omission than of implication.

It is popularly believed, that if Napoleon with

his retreating army had been stopped at the river Beresina, the whole must have perished or been captured; and it is perfectly true, that if the Russians had been in force west of that river, so critical was its position, that such a result must inevitably have followed. At the same time, it is generally asserted that every precaution had been taken by those who planned this campaign, and carried it through triumphantly, to stop the retreating army, which was only saved from annihilation by the blunders of Admiral Tchitchagoff. Whilst statues are erected to Kutusoff as the conqueror of Borodino, Tchitchagoff is stigmatised as the man "*who ought to have taken Napoleon.*" Sir Walter Scott, adopting this version, says, in his life of Napoleon, that "the admiral was waiting for a wind."

Let us now put together a few facts, which may show both the extent of this misrepresentation, and whence it has arisen.

"Admiral Tchitchagoff, one of the energetic men of Catherine's school, had been minister of marine. At the outset of the campaign, he proposed to the emperor the only bold or clever plan suggested; namely, to patch up a peace with the Turks, and to lead the army then opposed to them

offensively to the shores of the Adriatic. Having been sent to take the command of this army, he received subsequent instructions to advance from Wallachia and Moldavia into Volhynia. His orders were to drive back Prince Schwartzenberg, and to push northwards when this was effected, capturing the city of Minsk, if he could, and occupying the western side of the Beresina, a narrow river, which, prolonged by a canal, connects the Dnieper and the Dwina. He was thus to cut off the invading army.

The Emperor Alexander had sent to him Colonel Tchornicheff, his aid-de-camp, (now Prince Tchornicheff, and minister of war,) to inform him that if he could take up his position on the Beresina, he should be joined by generals Wittgenstein, Steinghel, and Hertel, with forces which would raise his army to 160,000 men, to oppose the return of the French. The admiral had approached with the small force under his command, to within a few marches of Minsk, on the 31st of October, when he received an order from Kutusoff, (who was following Napoleon in his retreat, commenced from Moscow on the 19th of the same month,) to the effect that as he had reason to know that the French intended to direct their march towards the

rich provinces of the south, he (Tchitchagoff) was to retrograde, and cover the city of Kief, instead of advancing to the Beresina. Kief being now a hundred and fifty leagues behind the admiral, he disobeyed this order, which turned out, after all, to have originated with Kutusoff in the *dream of a soldier!* Continuing his march on Minsk, Tchitchagoff, who had been obliged previously to detach 20,000 men, under Sacken, to keep in check the Austrian commander, Prince Schwartzenberg, contented himself with directing a corps of recruits, which was to have been sent after him, from the south, to make for Kief. Tchitchagoff subsequently detached Tchornicheff at the head of a body of Cossacks, to forage the country; and here great activity was displayed by the young diplomatist, who had hitherto distinguished himself in the boudoirs of Paris, where he had excited considerable sensation by obtaining, through an intrigue with the wife of a great functionary, the plans of the impending campaign. He penetrated even as far as the estates of the Czartoryskis, whence he brought back a celebrated picture in their possession to his commander. The admiral then despatched him to penetrate across the country to General Wittgenstein, and arrange with precision the point

and time where the latter was to join him at the Beresina.

On the 16th, Tchitchagoff, after a series of successful engagements, took possession of Minsk, which its Polish governor, Brenikoffski, made no proper efforts to defend; and he captured in this city, which was one of the great depôts for the French army, provisions sufficient to ration a hundred thousand men for six months.

On the twenty-first, the admiral attacked and carried the fortified bridge-head of Borisow on the Beresina, the bridge, and the town on the bank beyond. The town on the eastern bank was retaken by Oudinot, on the 23rd; but Tchitchagoff broke up the bridge and retained the entrenched bridge-head on the other side.

Tchitchagoff had therefore fulfilled all his instructions; he had taken Minsk, he had established himself on the banks of the Beresina, three days before Napoleon's arrival; but instead of being joined by the forces promised him, he found himself with sixteen thousand men to oppose Napoleon's passage, instead of with the hundred and sixty thousand announced him!

The Beresina is not wide, but the steepness of its banks in some places renders its passage difficult.

When Napoleon reached it, and learned the capture of Minsk, it was natural to suppose that he should march on Wilna, another great depôt which was still held for him. In the supposition that he would take the Wilna road, the admiral acted. But on account of the nature of the Beresina's banks, there were only in that direction, three points on which the passage could be conveniently effected. That of Borisow was the best; and if the French had been in possession of the bridge-head on the western bank, as well as of the town, they might here have got over all their artillery and baggage. South of Borisow, at a distance of about fifteen miles, was the point of Ucholoda; thirty miles north of Borisow was that of Weselowo, both of which admitted of a passage, though both offering great difficulties for the transport of artillery and baggage. With only sixteen thousand men, it became impossible for Tchitchagoff to guard all three of these points. If he had divided his force, to occupy a position opposite either to Weselowo or Ucholoda, the French would have forced the bridge-head of Borisow; and this the admiral resolved to defend, contenting himself with observing the other places. On the 24th, Napoleon with the *grande armée* retreating from Moscow, arrived at the Beresina;

on the 25th he manœuvred on the eastern bank; and on this day Tchitchagoff received from both Wittgenstem and Kutusoff the positive intelligence that Napoleon would cross below Beresino, a small town on the Beresina, about thirty-five miles south of Borisow. Disbelieving this information, which would have led him to descend thirty-five miles south of Borisow, the admiral continued obstinately to hold the bridge-head of that place; and at last Napoleon crossed at Weselowo, thirty miles to the north, as it has been said. Two bridges were thrown across after repulsing the feeble Russian detachment which had been placed rather to observe than defend the passage. On the night of the 26th, the army commenced crossing, and continued all the day of the 27th, during which the admiral assembled all his forces and attacked the French at day-break of the 28th.

The vanguard of Wittgenstein only appeared in sight on the other side when too late to oppose the passage, but having on the 28th attacked the rear of the French army on the eastern bank, whilst Tchitchagoff attacked on the right, the consequence was that the French were obliged to abandon their baggage, their artillery, and all the camp followers.

In the first place, therefore, Tchitchagoff alone of any of the Russian generals had been three days at his post when Napoleon reached the Beresina. Kutusoff, who had several times vainly attempted to bar the passage of the retreating army, was that day only advancing upon Kopys, ninety miles off, and taking a false direction. Wittgenstein, by his gross mismanagement, instead of joining Tchitchagoff on the 21st, only came up on the 27th, and then could not cross till he had sent to Tchitchagoff for pontoons.

Secondly, if the admiral had obeyed the orders received from Kutusoff on the 31st of October, he would have been four hundred miles off, near Kief, on the 24th of November; and there would have been no one to guard the Beresina at all.

Thirdly, if Tchitchagoff had known exactly where Napoleon had intended to pass—with his limited means—he could have done no better than to maintain, as he did, the bridge-head at Borisow; because, if he had marched to Weselowo, the rear-guard of the French in the town opposite would have forced the bridge-head, and then Napoleon would have been master of the only spot where his baggage and artillery could have passed in security. In a word, it was out of Tchitchagoff's power to

prevent his passing. How was it to be expected, that with sixteen thousand men he should be able to stop the very army which, on its retreat from Moscow to the Beresina, Kutusoff failed to arrest in its progress at Krasnoi, where with a hundred and thirty thousand men he attempted to bar its passage? He therefore confined himself to the defence of the most favourable spot, obliging his adversary to resort to one less propitious, where he met with great disasters.

It is therefore plain, that if the admiral had for any purpose whatever drawn off his forces from the bridge-head of Borisow, that Napoleon's army seizing it, would have passed without the loss of baggage or artillery, and the consequent confusion which it never recovered.

Now, it is to be remembered that on the 24th both Wittgenstein and Kutusoff, either self-deceived, or deceived by Napoleon, had sent to inform Tchitchagoff that the French army was making for Beresino, thirty-five miles south of Borisow;—if the admiral had acted on these advices, he would have been thirty-five miles off, and the invaders would have passed scot free. It is therefore very obvious, that little was in the power of the admiral, but this little he did in the most effective way, and only

by following throughout the dictates of his own judgment, in opposition to the orders and advices of his blundering colleagues.

How is it, then, that when he alone of all the Russian generals did his duty, he should have been made to bear the burthen of their want of energy, activity, and talent?

We may, perhaps, find a solution to the injustice done him in the following account of his life and character:

Admiral Tchitchagoff belongs to a school which has long since ceased to be tolerated in Russia. The author, in this brief notice, is enabled to speak with the more impartiality of him, that he has no sympathy with the ideas, no respect for the opinions which characterise one of the last offshoots of the Voltarian school of Catherine, to whom that philosophic Semiramis allowed unbounded freedom of speech and action, in favour of their energy and talent, and the consonance of their opinions with her own. At the same time, he cannot, as an Englishman, but admire the love of liberty which has made him alone, out of his generation, or the one which is succeeding it, cast fortune, power, and honours to the wind, sooner than cringe to a despotism which—daily contracting—

will not, like the genius of Catherine, tolerate any departure from abject servility, even in favour of exceptional services or merits.

The Empress Catherine, the strong-headed woman who never allowed her passions to interfere with her judgments—a true Queen Bess minus her prudery, her ill-temper, and hypocrisy—was not without redeeming inspirations. Reckless of blood and crime to attain her object, she was never causelessly tyrannical or cruel. Not only did she allow more liberty than has been enjoyed within her realm before or since her reign, but, whether dictated by her head or heart—whether by her acute perception of true greatness, or by the benevolent jollity of her disposition, where it was not ruffled by a strong interest or a stirring passion,—it is certain that she once entertained some serious thoughts of attempting to elevate the condition, political and social, of her slave subjects.

The French Encyclopædists, whom she patronised, and whose patronage she enjoyed, whilst their mouths were full of phrases of human equality and fraternity, were little disposed to fraternise with the children of a race, whose character appeared indelibly branded with the vices of servitude.

Catherine is said by her apologists to have im-

bibed from them a profound disgust for her subjects, and to have learned to regard her people as one whom no human effort could redeem from their moral degradation. This may, or may not have been her conviction; and it is fitting to remark that the prize essay which she proposed to the academy of St. Petersburg, on the best means of freeing the slave population, was dated 1767. Now the subsequent rebellion of Pugatcheff, which took place in 1773, must have given striking evidence of the dangers to be apprehended from the barbarous violence of the peasantry, in any similar attempt, unless undertaken with great care and preparation; and the appetite for conquest in which she afterwards indulged, may have alone, in reality, diverted her from a project which she was then glad to find an excuse for abandoning.

Most of the remarkable men of her reign, however, were imbued with this opinion; and the author regrets to say, that the most honest and talented Russians he has known, are the most bitter in the expression of their disgust and contempt of their countrymen,—the most incredulous of their possible amelioration.

The author of these volumes has been on many occasions reproached with Russo-phobia by the

press,—an imputation which he may conscientiously disclaim; but what would those say who lay it to his charge, if they could hear the private opinions of some of the most remarkable men amongst the Russians, who ridicule the ideas of the author as visionary, because he does not despair of the eventual progress and improvement of the Russian people!

Where the author, in preceding works dedicated to this subject, has sketched in the boldest and most unsparing lines, the ungainly features of the national character, and the debasing nature of the Russian government and institutions,—he has spoken far less ill of them than he has heard Russians speak; and besides being, as he believes, more liberal of praise—where praise was due—than themselves, he has always been willing rather to attribute the national condition to its government and institutions, than to consider these as the result of an inherent infirmity of character in the people.

Unhappily, however, nearly all men distinguished amongst the Russians by independence of disposition, extent of intellect, or elevation of views, have come to the desolating conclusion, that the national character of their countrymen is a barren

soil, irredeemable by cultivation. They look on them as born to, and worthy of the servitude in which they linger; and appeal to the very existence of that servitude as a proof that their countrymen are hopelessly below the average standard of the rest of the white race. It is deeply to be lamented that this is an English prejudice too. By a strange inconsistency, it is entertained by the very writers who most readily tax an author with exaggeration on the subject. These gentlemen of the press, who often pique themselves on being pacific men of pens and ink, are nevertheless prejudiced in their judgment by ideas derived from their turbulent ancestry, whose violences they so solemnly decry. They have sympathies for a spirited and warlike race, though without another virtue; but they have none for a people wanting in these qualities. When you show them the condition of the Russians, they turn aside with disgust and contempt, and judge that so many millions deserve, because so many millions endure it.

In a similar spirit, Tchitchagoff, the admiral, general, and minister of marine, virtually renounced his nationality some thirty years ago; whilst, enthusiastic in his admiration of England, he made it his adoptive country, imbibing, singularly enough,

all the intolerance of John-Bullism. The Emperor Alexander, considering that the long and valuable services of the absentee entitled him to retire in peace whithersoever he chose, did not disturb him; but Nicholas, whose arbitrary and vexatious temper is chafed and fretted at any semblance of independence, could not even allow a man who had long since seceded from the political scene, after having eminently served his country, to enjoy in his retirement his hardly-earned repose. He appears to have been long perplexed betwixt the impropriety of coming to an open breach with one of the illustrations of his predecessor's reign, and the irritation caused by finding the admiral so far behind the spirit of the time at the court of Russia, that he did not eagerly conform to a hint of the imperial wishes. The story of Tchitchagoff, and of his treatment by the Romanoffs, is worthy of being related in some detail to the reader,—not as throwing any great additional light on the character of Russian despotism, but because of a degree of authenticity in the testimony it affords, which it is so rarely in the power of a writer on Russian affairs to offer to the public.

Admiral Tchitchagoff served originally in the guards of the Empress Catherine, but after his

extreme youth, devoted himself to the naval service, for which he always retained a marked predilection, and in which he signally distinguished himself. On the accession of Paul, Tchitchagoff, then captain, was commanding one of the ships of his fleet, when reviewed in the gulf of Finland. Paul happened to be affected with sea-sickness, which drove him below, and after the manœuvres, distributed the usual rewards so much according to the arbitrary dictates of his fancy, that the best fell to the share of those who had least deserved them, and the most meritorious officers were obliged to put up with others so contemptible as to be rather marks of disapproval than of favour. The youthful captain received the third class of the order St. Ann, a little bauble attached to the sword-knot; but as his sword was a gold sword of honour, engraved with a flattering inscription, and presented to him by the Empress Catherine for his gallant conduct at the naval battle of Vyborg, against the Swedes, he chose to regard this decoration as a mark of unmerited disapprobation. Under the plea of ill-health, he sent in his resignation; but Paul dispatched his own doctor, to ascertain the truth of the pretext; and it was only by the collusion of his medical attendant, that he escaped the consequences.

The emperor gave him his dismissal,—"*but without pension, in consequence of his youth.*"

Some years afterwards, Paul having determined to fit out a fleet to co-operate with the English in the disastrous expedition to the Helder, he thought of Tchitchagoff, who was sent for by Koucheleff, the minister of marine, and informed that the emperor had graciously vouchsafed to appoint him rear-admiral.—"And I suppose," said Koucheleff, "I am to convey to his majesty the assurance of your gratitude at the favour conferred?"

"Why," replied Tchitchagoff, "I have no particular reason to be grateful; firstly, because I am in bad health; secondly, because, though the promotion may be sudden, the undeserved slight which drove me from the service has enabled my inferiors in rank to get so far a-head of me that, though I have been appointed rear-admiral, I shall still be serving under their orders."—"Oh!" replied Koucheleff, the "emperor, you know, has a right to do as he pleases; he is always promoting one man in the army without rhyme or reason over the head of another, and half the officers in the army might refuse to serve, if this were a reasonable cause of dissatisfaction."—"Well, half the officers in the army ought to refuse to serve, in such a case," replied Tchitchagoff,

with the bluntness of a sailor, and the freedom of speech to which a rising man in the reign of Catherine had become accustomed. The minister then informed the newly made admiral, that the emperor would accord him the peculiar favour of receiving him the next day, in his private cabinet. On the following morning, the admiral repaired to the palace of Pablovzk, where, waiting till he was called, amongst a crowd of admirals and generals, he was being congratulated on the favour into which he had been taken, when the minister, Koucheleff, passed to go in to the emperor.—"Oh!" said he to Tchitchagoff, "I have not seen his majesty since our conversation of yesterday;" and a few minutes after, he came to lead the young commander into the presence of Paul. Paul was foaming at the mouth with rage.—"So, sir!" said he, "you are not satisfied,—you do not wish to serve,—you are a Jacobin,—you wish to enter the service of the English.—Hold your tongue, do not answer me. Well, we will teach you! Send him to the fortress of St. Petersburg!—but, stop;—take away his sword, strip off his orders!—no, he is not even worthy to wear his uniform, not a particle of it!" And the great functionaries of the empire there resent, having hastened to undress him, Tchitcha-

goff was forced to make his way to his sledge, through the crowded anterooms, in his shirt and drawers.

When conveyed to St. Petersburg, Pahlen, the military governor, the man who afterwards murdered Paul, and whose son, the ambassador of Alexander and of Nicholas, is well known in France and England,—Pahlen, who happened to be a private friend of the admiral's, observed to him,—"What is to be done?—you must go to the fortress; it is your case to-day, it may be mine to-morrow." When transmitted to the fortress, the governor said:—"The order is to confine you in the secret prisons. I have nothing to do with the secret prisons; I never saw the inside of them; I only know that those who go in never come out of them. They are under the direction of Lapoukin; I will send to him; but I am sure there will be a counter-order, so you had better choose yourself one of the casemates; and on account of my friendship with your father, I will make you as comfortable as I can."

But no counter-order came, and the governor said, "My dear sir, Lapoukin is here; you must go to the secret cells; but I have made inquiry, and they are not so bad as I thought them."

Now, although Lapoukin also was a private friend of the admiral's, who had been singularly fortunate in falling into the hands of people who took a personal interest in his fate, it may still be supposed that he did not feel very comfortable in going to these dungeons, whence the governor had informed him that no prisoner ever returned.

The secret cells were in a raveline of the fortress. It was here that afterwards the conspirators in the rebellion of 1825 were confined. Here the noble Pestel is said to have been tortured, and hence he was led out to die on the glacis beyond. There were three distinct sorts of cells; the best were by no means to be disdained by a captive, and in one of these Tchitchagoff was located, and for several days, through the friendship of Lapoukin, was provided with an excellent table. Nevertheless, knowing the character of Paul, and that he always followed up one blow at his victims by another, he was doubtful of the continuance of this indulgence; and the emotions he had gone through, acting on a frame enfeebled by illness, led to fever. He was in bed, when suddenly the order came to drag him from it to one of the common dens, where a silent soldier stood on guard at the head of his pallet. At last he was visited by Pahlen, who

was interested in him. "If you had known this," said Pahlen, "would you not rather have served than have been thus imprisoned?"—"I had rather not have served; but of course I would have preferred serving to this captivity."—"Very well," said Pahlen, "I will arrange matters for you."

When the military governor of St. Petersburg was gone, the sick man was removed back to his first quarters, and then again he was suddenly transferred back to his dungeon,—so fearful was even Lapoukin that it might be discovered that he had shown any unauthorised lenity to his protégée, even in the depth of these silent dungeons. At length, however, Pahlen returned.—"The emperor is satisfied; I have told him you were sorry for your conduct, and that if you had known what would have happened, you would have served without reply."—"If the emperor had put the question thus,—'Will you serve or be shut up in the fortress?' certainly I would have preferred his service."—"Well, well," said Pahlen, "that will do; you must now follow me to the emperor;—I am sorry that you are in a burning fever, but it cannot be helped."

They left the fortress by a secret water-gate,—and this is why the governor or garrison never see

any one confined in the secret prisons leave them. This has led to the commonly accredited report mentioned in the "Revelations of Russia," that a whole regiment was walled up in it, because seen to enter and never seen to leave its walls. After crossing the Neva, it became necessary to send for the admiral's uniform, which had been left in the emperor's wardrobe, at the palace of Pablowski, some twenty-five miles distant.

When ushered into the presence of Paul, he appeared anxious to make amends for his former injustice, and seizing the admiral's hand, placed it next his heart. "I know you are a Jacobin," said he, "but only fancy you see a red cap upon my head, and serve me zealously."—"I know," replied the admiral, "full well, that your majesty wears an imperial crown, and not a red cap, and will conduct myself with the loyalty becoming that conviction." —"As for orders, you shall only take orders from Koucheleff, who leaves *carte blanche* to every one, and you shall sail with Popham, the English commissioner, and so not be under the orders of any one."

In the year 1800, Tchitchagoff was made minister of marine, and continued to occupy that situation till 1811.

He found the whole navy in such a condition, that he was obliged to break up numerous rotten ships, and to introduce most stringent reforms.

Aware of how useless was a Russian fleet in the Gulph of Finland, and the Black Sea, and how impossible to form sailors in those waters, he kept a fleet in the Mediterranean, to the extent of twelve sail of the line. This fleet, under the command of Siniavin, engaged and defeated the Turks at Tenedos, and was afterwards netted by the English in the Tagus.

Shortly afterwards, Sir James Saumarez was sent into the Baltic to co-operate with the Swedes, having under his command, in addition to several frigates, the Victory, on which he hoisted his own flag, and two other line-of-battle ships, commanded by Sir Byam Martin, and Sir Samuel Hood.

The Swedes, on their part, had fifteen sail of different descriptions, cruising in the Gulph of Finland, whilst the British fleet kept about the Sound, with the exception of a frigate or two occasionally seen with the squadron of their allies. Tchitchagoff, on receiving this intelligence, judged that if he could secretly fit out an expedition, the Russian fleet might fall upon the Swedes and get

back into its harbours before the English could come up to their assistance.

The minister of marine had made unremitting efforts to ameliorate the condition of the navy. He now promptly and privately got ready, beneath his own eye, eleven sail of the line, besides smaller vessels. Everything that the utmost care and unremitting attention could do, was done, in the selection of the crews and the fitting out the ships. This fleet, officered by the picked men of the Russian navy, and commanded by Khanikoff their best admiral, took to sea, and surprised the Swedish squadron, which fled before it,—one half running in between the rocks at Orebroe on the coast of Finland, but the other half, unable to make the same place of safety, remaining exposed to the Russian fleet. Nevertheless, Khanikoff and his experienced officers,—probably because they knew their crews so well, instead of eagerly seizing this favourable accident to attack the Swedish squadron, contented themselves with observing it, and after a time put in to the Finnish port of Hanhout.

The English admiral, however, being informed that a Russian fleet had come out, sent up two of his line-of-battle ships, which no sooner appeared

in the Gulph of Finland, than the whole Russian fleet run before them, making for the Livonian coast, and getting safe into Baltisport and Reval, with the exception of one sail-of-the-line, which was captured by Sir Byam Martin.

On learning the result of this expedition, the minister of marine communicated to Alexander his conviction that nothing could ever be made of the Russian fleet, which, not having been within the memory of man in a condition so advantageous, had proved so worthless, under circumstances so favourable. This experiment satisfied him of the folly and inutility of wasting the resources of the empire on a fleet, which a few British vessels could always imprison in its native harbours.

Admiral Tchitchagoff, however, always an enthusiast for the naval service, became inspired with a marked predilection for the first maritime nation in the world. Having obtained permission to travel, he came to England in 1811, and married a Miss Ferrers, daughter of the Rev. — Ferrers, incumbent of Bedington, in the county of Surrey. Having been recalled near the person of Alexander, who continued to repose the greatest confidence in him, he refused to have any more to do with the navy, as being a department on which all his efforts would be vainly wasted.

In 1812, after proposing offensive operations against Austria, he took the command of the army of the south, in the campaign of which a brief notice has been given. Tchitchagoff then requested permission to go abroad, and retire from active life,—a request with which Alexander the more readily complied, that notwithstanding the high sense he appeared to the last to have entertained of the value of his counsels, he found the admiral both unwilling to continue his services, and given to a freedom of speech which was highly distasteful to his favourites.

Tchitchagoff never returned to Russia, but continued to inhabit England and France till the accession of Nicholas, who assured him that the permission his brother had given him to remain abroad should be religiously respected. When the French revolution of 1830 took place, the Russian government ordered all Russian subjects to quit that country. The admiral received a letter, signed by the emperor, and conveying to him the same injunction, under the pretext, "that his loyalty would be shocked by a further protracted residence in a country in which he was liable daily to hear his government abused."

Tchitchagoff obeyed, but remonstrated, and Ni-

cholas deprived him of his pensions, under the plea *that he was too old.* Paul, it will be remembered, having many years before done the same thing on *account of his youth.* The admiral was in Italy when the tyrannical ukase of Nicholas appeared, declaring that all nobles remaining more than five years out of Russia forfeited their rank, estates, and property. He then wrote to his imperial majesty, resigning his rank and honours, but praying, in consideration of his privilege as a noble, confirmed by solemn ukase of the Empress Catherine, —as well as out of regard to his august brother's promise to that effect, that he might be allowed to remain abroad, and occasionally visit France, on account of his family connexions in that country. The emperor accepted his resignation, but refused to exempt him from the consequences of the new law. The plain-spoken old admiral wrote to Nicholas, telling him unreservedly his opinion of his conduct, and renouncing his estates and nationality. The emperor then seized on the property of the veteran, whose well-earned pensions he had previously withheld.

Thus was the admiral treated, when blind and old, after serving not only with zeal and distinction, but with probity, through three reigns. He con-

soled himself for the honours, rank, and fortune which he would not hold at the price of his freedom, by retiring with rights of English citizenship to an English cottage.

Well known to the inhabitants of Brighton, in which place he long resided, the admiral is still living. Though deprived of his sight, he is in the full possession of his intellectual faculties,—a venerable, intelligent, and plain-spoken old man.

It must not be imagined either that he is one of those morose and disappointed cynists, who view the world and recall the past through the distorted medium of the soured and selfish feelings of a withered heart;—on the contrary, his romantic attachment to his first and only wife appears to have filled his existence with enduring and affectionate regret.

With too much dignity to parade his grievances, he has too much independence to withhold any of the particulars of his story; and the author, in giving them publicity, trusts not to have exceeded the liberty which a writer may take with the antecedents of every public man.

CHAP. IV.

THE SCLAVONIC RACE.

Let us now return to the Muscovite slave population, whose ignorance, prejudices, and superstitious faith in the omnipotence of their rulers, constitutes the greatest and most solid element of the colossal despotism founded in diametric opposition to the interests of so many millions. The author has endeavoured to show, that of the two classes into which it is divided, the least devoted to the Tsars is that composed of their own serfs,—and yet that even the private serfs were ready to seize with eagerness, on the only two opportunities which have offered within a century, of trampling on the yoke of servitude; that is to say, where the successful advance of a rebel chief, or of a foreign invader, shook their conviction of the omnipotence of their sovereign,—an omnipotence to which they habitually bow with humility and awe,

but to which they are bound by no ties of real or enduring affection.

He has endeavoured briefly to set forth the distinction between the warlike Ruthenian or Cossac race, and the Muscovite. Let us now suppose this Ruthenian people, composed of materials which daily grow more inflammable, acted upon by some external agency, and led to make common cause with other of its Sclavonic brethren; and there can scarcely be a doubt but that, if the enfranchisement of the Muscovite slaves were proclaimed, brute and apathetic as the serf population may remain till exposed to such an influence, it would be rapidly converted from inert matter useful to the ends of those who govern, into fuel for a social conflagration, which would consume this singular dsepotism with a rapidity proportioned to its extent.

The Muscovite, though he dislikes the Pole, cannot be led under any circumstances heartily to face him. It was judged necessary in the last Polish war, to spread the report amongst the Russian regiments, that they were being *sent to Warsaw to drive out the French*, who were atheists, and disbelieved in God and St. Nicholas.

When it proves, therefore, difficult to excite the Muscovites even against the Poles, it may be ima-

gined how little they could be depended on to take any part against the Ruthenians, a people whose superiority they tacitly acknowledge, whose religion they share, and whose dialect so nearly assimilates to their own.

On the other hand, the Ruthenian's strong instinct of independence—the recollection of his former liberties and privileges, all associated in his songs and traditions with his Polish fraternity,—the very facilities which his language, and often his religion afford, all tend to render him as apt to receive a political or social impulse from Poland, as he is well fitted to transmit a portion of it to the Muscovite. He forms, therefore, the transitory link through which, the unquiet spirit of the Sclavonic race—not only beyond the frontiers of Russia-Proper, but beyond the pale of the Russian empire—may act with galvanic rapidity, at any given moment, upon the old Russian (Muscovite) people.

Nothing can be more fallacious than a blind confidence in the unalterable submissiveness of a slave population, based only on its ignorance and abasement, wherever the rule of the task-master has become so severe as to shew at the first glimpse, even to the grossest and most indolent natures, the pro-

spective advantages of freedom. There is no condition of humanity in which, so that man be oppressed, he is incapable of appreciating, even though he may not know rationally how to enjoy, its benefits: like the apes, who come and warm themselves at the embers of the negroes' fires, though they know not how to keep alive the genial warmth.

There is no social condition so abject that does not in some form exhibit the instinct of property, —an instinct of which even animals are not divested; —and what is more valuable to the slave than the possession of his own person, wherever he is made keenly and directly to feel that he is the property of another?

The precise nature of an equal extent of political servitude may escape the perception of a dull and apathetic race, but it is idle to suppose that the most utter seclusion from the world, or the profoundest ignorance, will prevent those who linger in the trammels of social bondage, from as early comprehending the announcement of its cessation as the child understands the uses of food when hungry, or the comforts of warmth when cold. An outbreak occasioned by political tyranny can only be the result of some extent of previous effervescence, whether open or hidden; but the

slaves who groan beneath the yoke of an oppressive private servitude, may bow to-day without a thought of resistance,—and to-morrow, if the magic words of freedom be whispered for the first time in their ear, rise in the most outrageous mutiny. The French revolution, and all other political revolutions, have been like storms, of which it is the historian's province to retrace the long gathering clouds and sinister prognostications; but the revolt of the slaves of St. Domingo was comparatively sudden as the white squall or the earthquake. The slave bends without dreaming of resistance to-day —to-morrow a flash of light breaks in upon his brain, a ray of hope upon his heart, and he rises up at once to mortal strife. There are no nicely balanced influences to be weighed in estimating such an event,—it requires no further elements than a sufficient number, and sufficient oppression. The results, as with the powder-mine and the match, are everywhere liable to be the same—one moment a dark and inert mass—the next inevitably a volcano.

The government has no counter-influence to oppose to this danger, except religious fanaticism. But religious fanaticism, as we have endeavoured to show elsewhere, and shall attempt further on to

prove more fully, has been long upon the wane. When it was last successfully aroused to oppose the French invasion, it is scarcely to be doubted that it would have failed, if Napoleon had invoked in time the spell which fanaticism alone stood any chance of weakening. But how, by any misrepresentation, hope to render this feeling against Ruthenian co-religionaries, speaking an almost common language,—how raise it in the Ruthenian against the Sclavonic nations beyond, from whom he has derived his inspirations of independence?

It is to the Sclavonic family beyond the Russian frontier, as well as to the influences likely to operate on the Ruthenian, and from the Ruthenian on the Muscovite, that the attention of the reader is now about to be directed.

The popular opinion in England regards the Sclavonic race as either irrevocably gathered beneath the sceptre of the Tsars, or as already Russianised. Whilst yielding the tribute of its regret to the fate of Poland, it is prone to regard its fall as a misfortune beyond the power of man to remedy, and on which it is now idle to waste sympathies which may be thus diverted from some more useful channel. It turns hopelessly from the five millions in the kingdom of Poland, to the fifty

millions of Sclavonians concentrated within the limits of Russia-Proper, with the conviction that nothing is to be expected now, except from time; when the whole of the corrupt mass into which this last remnant of a gallant people has been absorbed, shall have gradually purified itself, like stagnant waters, which at length from the very excess of their impurity, deposit by a natural process their turbid elements.

As for such portions of Poland as are incorporated with Austria and Prussia, these feeble fragments are considered to have become long since reconciled to the paternal government of the one, and the liberal administration of the other; and at all events as irrevocably wrapped in the strong arms of an empire which reckons thirty-seven millions, and of a military kingdom which counts fourteen millions of subjects.

As to the rest of the Sclavonic family, supposed to be widely scattered amongst dominant races, its origin is regarded as only worthy of recollection from motives of historic interest,—not as matter of political consideration.

Russia, on the one side, is thus thought to have absorbed and assimilated the chief part of it, whilst the scanty remainder is supposed to be lost and

confounded in the midst of that German population which occupies the centre of the European continent—as it is vulgarly believed, to the extent of some sixty millions.

But this opinion is based on a most erroneous conception of facts, which the Russian, Austrian, and Prussian cabinets have always been interested in confusing and mystifying; an attempt in which they have been cordially seconded by the jealousies and national antipathy of the German writers. It is from these sources that our impressions have been chiefly derived, whilst the Sclavonians themselves were long apathetic and silent, and even now that they are everywhere rousing, know not how to reach our ear.

But when we find, on examination, that the rapidly increasing Sclavonic race in fact amounts at the lowest computation to 85 millions of human beings, whilst all the Germans in Europe do not in reality number more than 35, the question assumes a very different aspect. When we find that besides 20 millions of Poles, there are 25 millions of other Sclavonians without the pale of Russia, all foundation is destroyed for the inference we have been led to draw,—that all this race who had escaped incorporation and assimilation

with the Rusisan despotism, must necessarily, to avoid a similar fate, become absorbed and lost in the Germanic multitude.

On the other hand, when we come to examine the Russian despotism, and find that the only portion of its subjects fitted to remain its passive tool, is the unwarlike Muscovite people, which numbers 30 millions,—that the fidelity of 10 millions of Little-Russians becomes daily more questionable if turned against the Poles,—that the Poles are 20 millions, whose division and bondage only whets their patriotism,—when we consider that there are 25 millions of Sclavonians beyond, who are growing year by year more anti-German, and more averse to every kind of despotism,—these facts must shake the opinion, however strongly pre-conceived, that the nationality of Poland is swallowed up for ever, or that the preponderating influence of the Tsars will enable them to collect all the rest of the Sclavonians beneath the yoke of their dominion, who do not cordially take refuge in the arms of Germany.

On the contrary, whatever the future may bring forth, the empire gathered round the passive Muscovites by the long successful policy of their tyrants, is at least as much menaced by the rest of the Sclavonians, as threatening to them.

Far from the battle being won, the strife is only impending; but instead of being entered on by the oppressed against an overwhelming superiority of numbers, we find that in this respect the advantage —and the daily increasing advantage—is in their favour. This is a truth with which it is well that the public of England should be made acquainted, called as it must inevitably be, in a thousand modes which it is impossible to foresee, to interfere for good or evil.

Under the fallacious impression of a hopeless disparity of force, it would be natural to deplore any fermentation of the public mind amongst the Sclavonians, as only conducive to fruitless resistance, and to further suffering. There would be practical wisdom in discouraging by every means imaginable, all attempts on the part of any branch of this family, on the principle which leads humane people to knock a suffering animal on the head to put it out of its misery.

But if we view the question in its true light, it becomes obvious, that the east of Europe is threatened with important changes of so vast a character as no foreign influence could avert, and in which our interests and philanthropy are alike interested.

It may, at the first blush, appear, that since this Sclavonic family has remained, with the exception

of Russia and of Poland, so long quiescent, so divided in interests, and so widely scattered,—that there can be no reason to expect its political resurrection now. It is true that for centuries, with the exception of Poland, and a few unimportant branches, the rest of the Sclavonians have bowed with the same submissiveness to a foreign yoke, as the Muscovites to that imposed upon them by their princes. They were then in the condition of the Muscovites—resigned to servitude, without the consciousness that a better order of things could exist for them; whilst besides, in the isolation of their ignorance and prejudice, each scattered fragment had forgotten its relationship to the rest. If, instead of being the most numerous race in Europe, they had been, like the Chinese, the most numerous in the world, there was nothing to be hoped from them, under these circumstances. The extent of a people is nothing, until it wills its freedom or its independence; but then it becomes of proportionate importance in the estimation of its probable destinies.

The Sclavonians are however now unquestionably awakening from this long apathy; and, with the exception of the Muscovites, there is no portion of their race which is not more or less agitated by new-born aspirations of independence, or at least of liberty.

Unless with the handful of unconquered mountaineers of Montenegeo and the principality of Serbia, this feeling is of such recent growth, that it appears almost incredible to those a few years since best acquainted with the different branches of Sclavonians, grouped within reach of each other, though divided by the frontier lines of the Russian, Austrian, and Turkish empires, and of the Prussian kingdom. It is difficult to believe, if we judge of the future by the past, that a race buried for centuries in torpor, should possibly awaken to political animation by any but the most gradual—in fact, by imperceptibly gradual stages. But the past no longer guides in estimating the present or the future, when the present or the future contain conditions for which we look vainly to the past. In the material world it would be ridiculous to limit one's opinion of the possible speed with which distance may be traversed, by considerations drawn from a period when the motive power of steam was unknown or unapplied. So, in estimating moral influences, the existence of the press may account for effects which baffle all experience. We must not forget that though several ages have elapsed since the discovery of printing, its development as a political engine is comparatively recent, and its uses in eastern Europe still more so. The

Greeks of the Peninsula, for centuries abject slaves or merciless banditti, might have been judged a hundred years ago likely to continue for centuries more in their barbarism and ignorance; but—whatever traces may remain indelible in the present generation—now that the daily newspaper circulates in the remotest villages, it is obvious that the inhabitants must progress more in a twelvemonth (at least in political knowledge) than they could have formerly done through a long life of casual contact with a western people.

Let us examine for a moment how this Sclavonic family, variously estimated at from 85 to 100 millions, is divided. The Russian empire has its passive Muscovites, to the amount of from 33 to 36 millions—its 10 millions of Ruthenians. Though the kingdom of Poland has been cut down to less than a fourth of its extent, it shares with Austria and Prussia the Polish nation consisting of 20 millions, in the proportion of about two-thirds of the whole. These Poles maintain the same ardent longing for independence as when their servitude began. Besides these there are 7 millions of Bulgarians, Serbians, Bosnians, and Montenegrins in the Turkish empire; and of Sclavonians in the Austrian dominions, 18 millions more, consisting of Illyrians, Dalmatians, Hungarians, Transyl-

vanians, Silesians, Moravians, and Bohemians. Though the whole of this immense people has suffered subjugation, it has not amalgamated with its conquerors. Everywhere oppressed except in the Turkish empire, it is everywhere but there growing daily more anxious to shake of the yoke of its rulers.

The ambition of the Russian cabinet had not overlooked the identity of origin and the geographical contiguity of the provinces over which all these Sclavonians were dispersed; and founding on it the hope of uniting them beneath its rule, it took indefatigable pains to rouse these people through its emissaries. The Sclavonians of Turkey were led to resist the tyranny of the Porte; those of Austria, discontented with their lot; but the liberal opinions disseminated amongst them—at first too slowly to suit the views of the impatient autocrats,—have now far exceeeded the limits at which they were propitious to their policy; so that with the exception of the corrupt nobility of the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, Russia has no partisans but those who receive its gold; whilst the first feeling distinctly evoked, is that of antipathy to the arbitrary character of its government.

Each of the branches of the great Sclavonic

tree will be subsequently made the subject of detailed investigation; at present it suffices for the author's purpose to point them out to the reader as elements of that external agency which may some day act as a rapid solvent on the very body of the Russian empire. Before turning the attention of the reader to Poland, it was indispensable—so interwoven is the future of one portion of the Sclavonic family with the fate of another—to give some outline of these masses; and it is equally necessary to remind him of what the Prussian kingdom, and the Turkish and Austrian empires, are in their reality, if compared either morally or physically to the Sclavonic multitudes, though looking so imposing when dimly shadowed forth.

The Prussian kingdom, artificially compounded by the most ingenious policy from the most ungrateful materials, constitutes a state whose existence is perilled by the loss of a battle, whilst its population of fourteen millions comprises three millions of disaffected Poles on its eastern limits, and two millions and a half of discontented subjects in its Rhenish provinces. Germanic Austria with its thirty-seven millions of subjects,—of which only six millions are Germans—is a remarkable monument of what policy and diplomacy could

effect at a period antecedent to that upon which we are entering. Joseph the Second, who, like the Empress Catherine, wavered between liberal and despotic institutions, was strongly tempted to make this empire Sclavonic instead of German; and there is little cause to doubt that if he had listened to both these inspirations, it might have been at the present day the most powerful and firmly-seated on the European continent. As it is, we find it an heterogenous compound of divers races, without community of interests, language, predilections, or religion,—gathered not even through the *prestige* of military successes, but by the perfidies, the marriages, and treaties wherewith its cabinet repaired the incessant ill-fortune of the field, ever since with a handful of Swedes, Gustavus and his generals threatened the existence of the empire. With five millions of oppressed and exasperated Italians, with twenty-three millions of Sclavonians, exclusive of the hostile Magyars of Hungary, whilst presided by a race of princes whose imbecility has scarcely been redeemed by the genius of the arch-duke Charles, the existence of the state may be said to hinge on the life of Metternich, who himself has long been prone to boast, not of the solidity of the state, but of the

tact which still keeps its discordant elements together.

If we now turn to the Turkish empire, we find its European dominions peopled by eleven millions of Serbs, Bulgarians, Wallachians, and Moldavians, and by three millions of Greeks, Albanians, Jews, Armenians, and Gipsies, whilst the Turks scarcely number one million.

There is this, however, to be remarked, that though the intolerance of the Koran has not yet allowed any Moslemin people, cordially, much less eagerly, to court the light of knowledge,—and that on this account, even in a worldly point of view, Mahomedanism is more averse to progress than the most corrupted forms of Christianity,—still it has proved less oppressive in its spirit than Christian despotism.

The law of the prophet enjoined his propagandists to receive the proselyte as a brother, to slay the resisting unbeliever, and to enslave those who neither resisted nor believed, or to take tribute from them; but at the same time, it forbids all unnecessary cruelty.

Now the Ottoman Porte—though possessing its full share of Machiavelism in its conduct towards its Christian subjects—never vexatiously interfered

either in their municipal liberties, or in the exercise of their religion. All that it sought was to secure its tribute, and to crush rebellion; and as a general rule, it allowed habitual liberty by declining all attempt to govern, though it occasionally punished with undiscriminating ferocity.

Throughout the empire, local and municipal privileges and franchises had never ceased to exist, outliving the occasional violences of the Ottoman domination. On the whole, therefore, the Sclavonians, far better treated by the Turkish than by the Russian, Austrian, or Prussian governments, are there less than in any other state disposed to shake off allegiance to their rulers.

It is true that, originally excited against the Porte by the intrigues of Russia, a spirit of resistance was engendered, which led to the independence of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Serbia; but as portions of this population become enlightened, they learn to discern, and rapidly to disseminate amongst the rest, the fact that of all the despotisms amongst which the Sclavonic race is divided, the Porte is the most tolerant and hopeful for the governed. The establishment of tributary but independent governments within its dominions, exemplifies at once, for all its Sclavonic population, the possibility

of attaining beneath its supremacy a degree of liberty which neither Austria nor Russia would for a moment tolerate. The repugnance of the Porte to allow of the self-government of its Christian subjects, has been proved to be the more easily overcome, that such concessions form no outrageous departure from the general spirit of its policy; and that it will make no violent efforts to retrace its steps, or to avert a necessity to which it becomes reconciled by the certainty and punctuality of its tribute, which it was formerly obliged to dispute by force or fraud with rebellious pashas.

Having thus shadowed out all the gigantic elements which are silently but rapidly tending to operate a formidable diversion in favour of Polish nationality, we will turn to this branch of the Sclavonic family. It is true that the reader may at first judge the opinions set forth in the preceding pages as strangely hazarded, whilst his mind is still filled with imposing recollections of the empires which have parcelled out, and brought the weight of their collective powers to weigh on the dispersed Sclavonians. We are all too apt to consider any order of things which time has consecrated as immutable. A few brief years of continuance led the thinking public to regard the

principles of the Holy Alliance as unshakeably rooted, till its treaties were suddenly scattered to the winds. It should not be forgotten that the Austrian empire and the Prussian kingdom have only an artificial existence, their limits being the mere works of treaties; whilst the people which these parchments have divided by imaginary nationalities, retaining their own, remain in unreconciled millions and indestructible reality. The Polish people is every way entitled to take precedence of its Sclavonic brethren in this notice, not only on account of its having made the farthest and earliest progress in civilisation of any of the Sclavonic branches, but because on the one hand it forms the connecting link, which, by mingling the spirit of both, unites the west of Europe with the east; whilst on the other, predestined to an inevitable antagonism with the Russian despotism, as the primary condition of its existence, it is peculiarly, and it might be said solely fitted to work effectively on the elements which constitute all that despotism's strength. That is to say, that there is no reason to believe in the unaided self-development of any principle amongst the Ruthenians, much less the Muscovites, which might tend to the dissolution of the empire.

Still, the infection of Polish ideas (as the Russian cabinet terms it) is already gaining, and may rapidly progress amongst the Ruthenians; whilst the Ruthenian is as well calculated, and perhaps as solely fitted to convey them to the Muscovite, as to receive their impression from the Pole.

Russia, in its connection with Poland, has been compared to the murderer formerly punished by being bound to the dead body of his victim till its corruption reached his heart. The comparison is full of truth, in as far as applied to the probable subversion of the vital principle of the despotism by contact with its victim. It is from Poland that disease is rapidly gaining the strength of the Russian government; but then the corruption of that strength will be a commencement of life to the Russian people, which is now itself more comparable to a passive corpse moved to mischief by the spirit of a ghoul which has made its tenement of the unresisting clay.

In the midst of her degradation, of her sufferings and her woes, Russian Poland becomes daily, to her oppressor, more like Blue-Beard's key, from which the blood wiped on one end only appeared on the other. It is indispensable to maintain an immense force in the country, and these troops become

everywhere liberalized. Regiments are now shifted every few months from garrison to garrison, but still the canker gains,—whilst secret societies amongst the Poles become so multiplied as to defy effectual detection.

To the inhabitants of Russian Poland we shall accord, therefore, a greater space and a priority of notice in these volumes, both on account of the superior interest they inspire, and because comprising thirteen out of the twenty millions of their nation.

CHAP. V.

THE POLES IN THEIR RELATION TO RUSSIA.

WHILST in disposition the Poles bear a stronger resemblance to almost every other branch of the Sclavonic family than to the Muscovites, they differ from the whole of it in one important particular, which assimilates them more nearly with ourselves, and peculiarly fits them to lead the civilisation of their race.

All the rest of the Sclavonians derived their ideas and their religion from the eastern capital of the Christian world,—from that corrupt Byzantium, which degrading alike the name and language of old Greece, appeared an Asiaticised and monstrous compound of all the vices and the meannesses which had ever dimmed the chequered character of its glorious people,—their restless energy and turbulence, degraded to a treacherous and ser-

vile spirit of intrigue,—their pliancy and versatility into baseness—their chaste and marvellous instinct of the beautiful in art become a barbarous passion for the gaudy,—and with their philosophic genius and their thirst for knowledge, contracted into subtle sophistry, which spent itself in splitting theologic straws.

Tainted at the spring-head by such an association, though Christianity had prepared the social soil for better things, it had not brought in its train the dormant germ of any great or useful institution.

Poland, on the contrary, owed its civilisation and religion to Rome and to the West. All the lore and wisdom of antiquity—all those ideas of freedom and of justice which survived wherever Latinity was transmitted, together with a large share of of that chivalric element which the Norsemen spread so widely when they took possession of the thrones and lordships of so many lands,—mixed up though both might be with monkish rubbish and with feudal barbarism, hence operated on the character of the Polish nation, and have given it a deep and indelible analogy with that of western people.

Time has happily enabled us at home to disentangle and utilise these discordant materials, building up a solid edifice of greatness, to which every

preceding age distinguished by the progress of the human mind, has furnished us a stone. Greece, Rome, the middle ages, might all discover something of their genius, their experience, or their thoughts, in our civilisation; but it must not be forgotten that through centuries these elements lay in a confused and chaotic mass, from which we have not so long since disengaged them.

In France, which now rivalises with ourselves in civilisation, it is almost within the memory of man, that, by a social earthquake, some of these elements have been rescued from still hideous disorder; and we should not forget that ever since the same period, Poland has been writhing in the grasp of Russian despotism, anxious, for the purpose of securing its conquest, to demoralize and divide.

Though from the same source Poland may have inherited the feudal turbulence and the religious intolerance which, by causing her to drive her schismatic children (the Ruthenians) into the arms of Russia, and through the internal dissensions of her nobles led to her subjugation,—still there exists an identity of feeling with ourselves, for which we vainly look amongst other Sclavonians.

There is no point on which a man of the West

is apt to be so much deceived as in confounding in this respect Poland and Russia.

In his own country, a given amount of education, intellect, and delicacy of manners, may be usually judged as indicative of a certain delicacy of feeling, and of a pride which preserves from derogation,—he is accustomed to see those even coarse in their habits and manners, uncompromising in their dignity as men; and he cannot, therefore, bring himself to believe that association and education at least will not produce the same effect on a Russian.

But the Russian, when intellectual, accomplished, and accustomed even during a residence of half a life amongst us to our western institutions, is never to be depended on; however admirable a counterfeit, he is only a Brummagem imitation of a gentleman,—less to be trusted than a French or English menial, because less sensible to the "point of honour" than even menials in France and England.

There has never existed any pride of station, any self-respect amongst his people; he assumes them, like our fashions, as things necessary to polite life, but never to be placed in serious competition with the gratification of his passions or his interests.

He may live for twenty years abroad, scrupulous in the liquidation of his debts of honour, prompt to vindicate it, and jealous in maintaining the dignity of his position; but the same individual, when he returns, will submit to the grossest insult, cheat at play, cringe to the basest and most infamous man in the empire raised to ephemeral power; or if unjustly and suddenly deprived of wealth and honours, he will not blush to fawn humbly to obtain some petty favour from the enemy to whom he owes his ruin.

It is not meant to be asserted that there are no exceptional instances of men whose inherent sense of what they owe to themselves, proves strong enough to guide them, but that there is no public opinion to inoculate them with the necessary pride, which shames men from committing basenesses, and threatens them with the brand of its contempt.

This honest pride, which is apparent in its rough and homely degree in the lowest classes in France and England, is wanting in the first in Russia. The Tsars can shave the children of their bearded serfs, and give them rank and titles, education and fortune; but they possess no means of instilling into them a spirit which has never existed in the institutions of their people.

In this respect, Poland assimilates to the West, blending in a high degree with many of the vices of feudality, the virtues of chivalry, unknown to the rest of its Sclavonic brethren. And this distinction is not limited, as might be apprehended, to its noble minority; for the recognised principle has a remarkable action even on the majority, still in many provinces victims of the feudal system. In fact, just as in France some sixty years ago, the *vilain* indirectly refracted many of the most redeeming notions of his lord, so the nobility of Poland have given their tone to the peasantry; whereas, in Russia, there being no example of an elevating nature held out by any class whatever, none can rise in spirit as it improves in rank and fortune. The noble with fifty thousand serfs, or the imperial aid-de-camp, or the courtier powerful in his favouritism—is not in this respect one whit removed above the moujik; and therefore nothing exists in any rank which one inferior can emulate or attempt to reproduce.

Those who have never dealt with nations wanting in this foundation on which—imperceptible as it may be to our accustomed eyes—so much of our social system in reality reposes, have difficulty in be-

lieving the chasm it leaves between such races and ourselves,—a chasm which does not the less seriously divide us, that its surface may be bridged over to deceive the sight.

But if the Pole stands in this respect on the same footing as the nations of the West, being therein distinguished from his brethren, he is remarkable amongst all people of the world for his patriotism. Notwithstanding his versatile vivacity, his strong passions, and violent animosities,—notwithstanding the division and subjugation of his country, there is none in which traitors to its nationality are so rare; whilst even the few who ever betray it, almost without exception, expiate their treason by turning at some time or other on its enemies.

The turbulence of disposition which in Poland led to anarchic confusion in the last days of the national independence, was taken advantage of by its despotic neighbours, before—like that which for several centuries marked the character of the British nation—it had time to settle into the wholesome form of energetic activity; but this very turbulence which led to the subversion of its freedom, has singularly strengthened the vitality of its nationality. Even in those provinces which

Austria has possessed uninterruptedly since the first partition, as well as in those which Prussia governs, more than half a century of incorporation has failed to reconcile the inhabitants to their lot.

In those that have been subjected to the cruel violence of Russia, so ineffectual appears the endeavour to terrify them into any lasting submission, that it is the common opinion of the Russian authorities, that nothing but extermination of its population will permanently tranquillize the country. And in fact, what else remains to secure a conquest over a race which no severity will reduce to resignation?—where the women alone, as long as they propagate the population, will irreconcilably instil a deadly hatred of the oppressors into the minds of their lisping children,—where the first lesson of the mother is to point out to the infant where its grandfather, or its father, or its uncle, fought and bled, or was punished or imprisoned,—where, in 1845, intermarriage between a Polish female and the most powerful and wealthy servitor of the emperor is considered in the same light as religious apostacy?

But how exterminate a people, whose number at the lowest computation amounts to thirteen millions? For, though the territory of the kingdom of Poland

has been cut down till only five millions of inhabitants are left, the annexation by ukase of Vilna, Grodno, Vitepsk, Mohilef, Minsk, Volyhnia, Podolia and Bialystok to the Russian empire, has not sufficed to Russianize them in anything but name.

After the efforts of so many years, the indomitable tenacity of national life remains not only unimpaired, but increased in its vigour; and notwithstanding, or perhaps on account of the severity of the Russian despotism, instead of making any progress towards its extinction, it finds the disaffection of its victims daily gaining its agents and its armies.

It is a singular fact, that for the last two or three years, notwithstanding the extraordinary vigilance of the police, channels of communication have been opened between the Polish emigrants and their relatives, even for the conveyance of matter of most treasonable import, through the connivance of Russian staff-officers and employés, who, originally selected for their persecutive zeal, have become gradually imbued with the popular ideas of the country.

The fact once established, of the strong vitality of the national feeling of Poland, gives an importance to the character of its people, which

renders it pre-eminently worthy of our attention amongst all the Sclavonic races.

We are apt to attribute to the Pole of the present day, a turbulence of disposition, a tendency to exaggerate, and a proneness to violence, with which we should not accuse him without previously placing ourselves in his position, and considering what, under similar circumstances, our own feelings would be with regard to Russia.

Let us for this purpose briefly examine the condition of Russian Poland since its first partition.

The Empress Catherine, the least tyrannic sovereign who ever ruled in Russia, wrote fifty-one years ago to Repnin, her ambassador at Warsaw:—

"This is why I must impress on you to cause the armies now at your disposal in Poland, to act, setting aside all illusions of humanity, (*abstraction faite de toutes les illusions de l'humanité*) with the energy necessary to deprive its inhabitants of all means, and of all hope of revolting. You must not spare any of the inhabitants of this district, even if they should allege the quiet and retired lives they have been leading, excepting always such as may be taken in arms, after giving proofs of thy valour. These you had better incorporate in my

armies, as they may prove useful in the war which, as you know, we intend to carry into the south, after the pacification of Poland."

A few days after, Warsaw was stormed; and Suwarrow, one of the great captains of his age, and by no means the most inhuman of the Russian generals, put to the sword twenty-five thousand of the inhabitants of the suburb of Praga, inclusive of its defenders, women, and children.

This unscrupulous woman made energetic and cruel efforts to secure her conquests. She prosecuted vigorously the task (which experience had then not yet shown to be hopeless) of extinguishing its nationality. She shut up the schools, discouraging all instruction; and, lastly, after declaring to the world "that whoever was attacked in his religion or his circumstances was absolved from all allegiance, and had a right to seek through mankind for guardians and protectors,"—after reaping the praises of Europe for her toleration, she entered on a course of religious persecution in Poland, which we will give in the words of Colonel Szyrma, a Polish Protestant:—

"Who is ignorant of the cruel attempts at compelling whole villages and entire districts inhabited by the United-Greeks, to embrace the dominant

religion? Who has not heard of the spoliation of churches, and of cold-blooded atrocities committed, in White-Russia, Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia, on those who refused to abjure the faith of their ancestors? Tradition, that million-tongued and faithful annalist of the people, has chronicled these sufferings, handing them down from father to son. Within the consecrated precincts of churches, and on their altars, in innumerable places, are pointed out indelible stains of blood—blood of those who had suffered martyrdom for the faith in which they were born. At one of these village churches (Warkobalow,) a bloody sign of the cross is still shown to travellers on the entrance door. The sign is dated from that period of religious persecution, and was made by a bold villager with his own blood. After making it, he exhorted his fellow-villagers:—'Enter, and here let us perish for our faith!' The government spirri, astonished to see so numerous a peasantry determined to gain the martyr's palm, were deterred from the execution of their purpose; and that community long remained Roman Catholic, whilst the surrounding population was compelled to embrace the foreign religion. From the returns prepared at the close of Catherine's reign it may be seen that not less

than 3,160,000 Roman Catholics were then forced to go over to the dominant church. Missions for converting Roman Catholics used to be accompanied by a military escort. Placed under such safeguard, they traversed the country, forced the doors of Catholic churches and chapels in towns and villages, and consecrated them anew as if they had been profaned. Priests who would not change their religion were expelled their parishes, and were replaced by Russian popes. Intimidation and rewards were in turn employed with the Catholic clergy, and when these failed to effect their object, many were thrown into prisons and flogged; and the infliction of corporal punishment was jocularly called '*the anointing of the dis-united brethren.*'"

The Empress Catherine caused the public libraries to be transported into Russia, those whom she suspected as political opponents into Siberia. She removed the episcopal sees from those portions of her new territory which she wished to Russianize. After violating every most solemn treaty, she did not farther respect the capitulations entered into by her generals. There was an air of philosophic liberality and of playful gallantry thrown over these transactions, which has hitherto tended to veil her religious persecution of the Poles, and

oppressive conduct towards them, much more generally from the eyes of posterity than Colonel Szyrma seems to imagine.

Catherine, at the same time that she was exercising such wholesale severity towards the United-Greeks, had undertaken to protect the Jesuits, then disgraced by the pope, and the Polish protestants, and when Prince Repnine, her former lover, forwarded to her the forced abdication of the unhappy king of Poland, it was concealed in a bouquet, and presented to her on her name's-day with grateful attention.

The reign of Catherine as empress, undoubtedly within her hereditary dominions the best and mildest of Russian sovereigns who has ruled them yet, was, in her newly acquired conquest, violent and sanguinary.

Paul, her son, a man of generous heart, but of a narrow mind, deranged by occasional insanity, governed Russia in a manner which made his subjects regret his mother's reign. But in Poland, which he ruled in the same spirit as his native country, and which she had governed so much more oppressively, his accession was felt as a comparative benefit. It is true that numerous individuals were exiled to Siberia, or punished,—the

victims of his capricious temper, roused sometimes to anger by an indigestion or a sleepless night; but the general tenor of his policy was just, and he made it his especial care to repair, as far as he was able, the injustices of his predecessor. He put a stop to all religious persecution. He re-established the bishopricks of Vilna, Luck, Kaminiec, and Zitomir. He set at liberty the exiles sent by Catherine to Siberia, and he re-opened all the colleges and schools which she had closed.

Towards the end of his brief reign, sharing somewhat of his mother's contempt for his native subjects, Paul, who was essentially a creature of the wildest impulse, seems to have conceived a peculiar affection for the Polish nation. Death cut him short in his good intentions, before he had time to prove whether, towards that country, he would have made any departure from the usual instability of purpose, which led him to prepare a splendid triumphal entry for Suwarrow, and then to disgrace him because he had violated military etiquette in employing a general out of his turn.

The Emperor Alexander, in the early part of his reign, governed with moderation, though the pressure of the Russian system of administration,

and the heavy demands for men and money, were severely felt. The successes of the French republic had, however, inspired the Poles with a hope of independence, which the subsequent victories of the empire seemed upon the point of realising. Although Napoleon, after thebattle of Austerlitz, concluded a peace, without thinking of Poland, the majority of its inhabitants still continued to identify their interests with his triumphs. Kosciusko, it is true, the friend of Washington, and the Polish Washington in all but in his fortune, saw at once through the futility of these hopes, with the same sagacity as he subsequently penetrated the insincerity of Alexander. He augured that nothing could reasonably be expected for the liberties of Poland, from the man who had subverted those of France.

The tide of Napoleon's fortunes led him, however, at length, into Poland, and placed it in his power to dispose of that country, as he had of so many others.

Napoleon, as it is well known, then established the duchy of Warsaw, containing about one-fourth of old Poland.

Since its partition, Poland had never enjoyed as much freedom and happiness as in this portion of

it, when constituted under the presidence of the King of Saxony, into a nominally independent state, to which the French resident in reality transmitted his master's orders. Still, benefits were conferred upon it, which reconciled the country to its benefactor's tutelage. The introduction of his code abolished slavery and established equality in the eye of the law. He allowed a constitutional form of government, which, to be efficient, only required the removal of two clauses purposely introduced to render it illusory; viz., that though the members of its diet could vote, they were neither allowed to speak on any question, nor to take the initiative in it; and that, by the admission of unelected councillors of state to vote with them, it was always in the power of the government to swamp the national majority. But the country was administered by Poles; and though in the exhausting wars which followed, drained of its treasures and its blood, this fragment of old Poland gave them cheerfully; never showing a sign of dissatisfaction, except to see that Napoleon, after all his promises, was so niggardly in uniting to them any further portions of their territory, still in the might of the spoliating powers, although his victories made him so often arbiter of the destinies

of the whole. The establishment of the duchy of Warsaw had also the most happy effects on the condition of those parts of Poland under foreign dominion; its rulers necessarily entering on a policy of conciliation. The Emperor Alexander indeed, whose ideas appear always to have been liberal till he was called upon to put them into practice at the expense of the slightest shadow of his own authority, and who besides was never wanting in Byzantine craft, set himself up as a sort of opposition liberator to Napoleon. He held out to them the prospect of re-integrating the whole of Poland, under his dominion, as constitutional king, in which prospective arrangement, it must not be forgotten that the fact of his being a foreigner could be no serious drawback to a people who, like ourselves, had always been careless of conferring the national crown on a stranger.

It was quite natural that some of the most sensible of the Poles having convinced themselves by experience that nothing further was to be expected from Napoleon, should have turned to listen to the promises of Alexander. Not only the present Prince Adam Czartoryski, his personal friend and previously imperial minister and senator, but even the republican Kosciusko, joined in the same hopes.

The inspiring thought of Alexander's policy no doubt was that of depriving Austria and Prussia of their share of the spoil, by holding out the tempting prospect to their Polish subjects;—but the motives of sovereigns are nothing to the purpose, so that they lead to results beneficial to the governed.

His intentions in this respect were, however, frustrated; for whilst the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian cabinets seemed likely to quarrel about the spoil, after Napoleon's fall, they were suddenly startled by his return from the isle of Elba into the hurried signature of final and decisive treaties, which left Poland in its present condition.

The grand duchy of Warsaw, minus the portions restored to Prussia, was erected into a constitutional kingdom, and Alexander held out the promise that the Polish provinces which had been incorporated with the Russian empire, and which comprised more than once-and-a-half of the population of the Polish kingdom, should be eventually restored to it.

There was no fault to be found with the liberality of the new constitution, excepting that it was not beyond a few years observed. As long as it was so, it might be considered as the second boon

which had been then, or has ever been since, extended to the Poles from the time of the partition of their territory; but like the first, only to a small portion of it.

Out of about twenty millions, Napoleon had abolished servitude amongst about six millions. Alexander gave a constitution to about four.

The abolition of servitude lasted six-and-twenty years, being destroyed by the Emperor Nicholas long after Napoleon was no more. The constitution given by Alexander may be considered to have lasted six; after that, it was not only violated, but the government of that prince verged into a sanguinary despotism.

Let us, however, before entering on this period, give the reader some notion of the condition of Lithuania, and of the provinces which were not included in the kingdom of Poland, during this comparatively golden age. In 1818, the nobility of Lithuania, assembled at Vilna, came to the philanthropic resolution of enfranchising their serfs,—after the example of the former grand duchy of Warsaw, then the constitutional kingdom of Poland.

The liberal Alexander received their proposition with coldness, and commanded that they should proceed no further in the matter.

Khorsakof,—the same who, bringing up an army to the assistance of Suwarrow, was utterly defeated at Zurich by Massena,—being governor-general of Vilna, traced the plan of a promenade along the banks of the Vilia. The ground was, however, covered by rows of miserable houses, inhabited by the indigent portion of the population. Schlykof, the police-master, offered the proprietors of these houses from £8 to £12 to pull them down and clear the rubbish. As this offer was insufficient to cover the cost of demolition, they refused to undertake it, and the police-master had them pulled down for them, turning the houseless tenants adrift. They complained in vain to Prince Khorsakof.*

* Prince Khorsakof himself had owed much of his advancement in the time of Paul to Madame Chevalier,—if not the best, the best paid of actresses. She was the favourite of Koutaitsoff, formerly a barber, and at that time grand ecuyer and chief favourite of the emperor.

The only safe road to the emperor's favour was by obtaining that of Madame Chevalier, who vouchsafed to recommend the protégés to Koutaitsoff, who in his turn was all-powerful with the emperor. It was therefore customary, on the numerous benefit nights of the actress, to pay enormous sums for tickets. It is related that Khorsakof had an Alsasian secretary, whom he ordered on his arrival in St. Petersburg, to purchase and pay liberally for a ticket. The secretary thinking to have paid liberally, informed his master that he had given a hundred roubles. Koutaitsof, on hearing this, accused the poor secretary of his ruin, and running to a jeweller's, purchased a set of diamonds, with which he so successfully repaired his error, that Madame Chevalier invited him to tea, and a few days after obtained for him the command of a regiment.

The same Schlykoff fell upon an expedient equally unscrupulous and tyrannical, for enabling him to demolish other portions of the city, which his chief wished to have the credit of embellishing.

Declaring that the city of Wilna had undertaken to farm the excise at a stipulated sum, a complicated document was sent round, to which the citizens were peremptorily ordered to affix their signatures. Those occupying temporary lodgings, as well as mere travellers, were equally applied to, and did not hesitate to fulfil a formality apparently imposed on every one. At the end of the year, the produce of the excise had not covered the rent at which the town was said to have farmed it, and the police made those who had signed the declaration responsible for the deficiency. The proprietors of lodging houses and divided tenements were held answerable for the travellers, tenants, and lodgers who had signed beneath their roof; and thus, most of the owners of houses about the barrier were ruined; their houses being immediately pulled down, and the materials sold to pay their debt. Thus the environs of the cathedral and of the street leading to the suburb of Antokol were cleared.

Whilst this process of destruction was going on, Schlykof was reproached with demolishing and

ruining the city, and made answer,—"*that it was only necessary that some part of it should remain, as long as he was police-master.*

In Volhynia, where no stone is to be found, the streets are covered by a wooden bridge, or causeway, elevated above the soil. The inhabitants are forced to keep in order the part which is opposite to their dwelling, without reference to their means or the width of the street, thus rendering it a serious, and frequently a ruinous charge to the occupants of cottages.

Andreikovitch, the governor of Grodno, having been degraded to the inferior government of Volhynia for his misdeeds, to prove his zeal, ordered all the pavement of Zitomir, its capital, to be renewed. Hundreds of families being unable to comply with this order, the police sold their dwellings and their furniture; and they might be seen reduced to beggary, seeking refuge in holes dug in the clay soil.

In the city of Luck, in the same government, may still be seen whole streets of these wretched caves, which the inhabitants then dispossessed inhabit amidst fresh vexations and oppression.

The natural independence of the Polish character, and the long vicinity of these Polish provinces to

the constitutionally governed kingdom of Poland, rendered the decisions of the tribunals of the country less flagrantly venal or unjust; but whenever influence was used, the Russian imperial senate reversed their most solemn decisions.

Zubof, one of Catherine's lovers, and of the murderers of Paul, had vast estates conferred upon him in Samogitia, where the peasants were free. Zubof attempted to reduce them to servitude. After defending their cause before the tribunals for years, during which time the law allowed Zubof, till his right was disproved, to torture them at will, they were finally reduced to slavery.

In the district of Radomils, the Russian Kikine, secretary of the Emperor Alexander, was put in possession of several populous lordships, on which he found the peasantry either free or noble. He reduced them to servitude; they applied to the local tribunals, and eventually obtained a decision in their favour; but when Kikine appealed to the imperial senate, of course he had it his own way, and an armed force reduced his obstinate vassals.

The inhabitants of the district of Taraszcza likewise obtained a favourable decision against the Countess Branicka, niece of the celebrated Potemkin; but the countess also got it reversed by the senate.

Prince Anthony Radzivil, and his brother-in-law Witgenstein, equally succeeded with the senate, after failing with the tribunals of the country, in reducing to slavery the peasantry on their estates in the government of Grodno.

On the confines of Ukraine and Podolia exists a populous village, named Podvysokie. In 1771, its inhabitants not only refused to join in the massacres excited by Catherine's emissaries, but endeavoured to put down those who did so. Their proprietor, Felix Potocki, gave them their freedom as a recompense, and presented them with a banner, in sign of their emancipation. After the death of his successor, his widow, Thecle Potocki, called in the Russian authorities to reduce them to servitude. The Polish jurisdiction protected them by its repeated decisions ; the Russians then, to conquer such obstinacy, quartered on them so large a number of troops as reduced the inhabitants to ruin. Nevertheless, they held their freedom till the reign of Nicholas, when in 1831 the Russian authorities ordered even the flag which the peasantry had learned to regard with superstitious veneration, to be delivered up ; and it was given up by the Greek priest, protected by an armed force, in the midst of their cries and lamentations.

Many of the commercial towns throughout the whole of Poland were ruined by the arbitrary measures of the collectors of the revenue. Although its chiefs were always in connivance with the smugglers, both to prove their zeal and for the purposes of extortion, they exercised their right of search in a manner ruinous to the honest trader.

"An eye-witness, describing this operation, says: "All is tranquil and unsuspecting, when suddenly the Russian battalions pouring in from several streets, isolate a given portion of the town, and take possession of all the houses. The inhabitants, men and women, the children and the aged, are driven from their dwellings, happy if allowed to carry off a mattress on which to sleep in the open air in some street unguarded by bayonets. The warehousemen, traders and shopkeepers, are seized, and bound to posts, as if in the pillory; as if to be forcedly obliged to witness the ensuing depredation of their property. No one is allowed to penetrate into that quarter of the town as long as it is occupied by the military. The passing traveller is obliged to make a circuit through bye-streets, filled by the families expulsed from their homes. Whether or not any smuggled articles are found, the inhabitants must always compensate the revenue

agents for their disappointment and their zeal. Even when his liberty and his property is restored to the trader, the latter has always undergone so much of damage and spoliation, that this process a few times repeated tends to inevitable ruin.

Besides this highway robbery, vexatious extortions on a small scale incessantly exhausted the means of the commercial class.

Constant threats of these disastrous searches were held out to oblige its members to avert their execution by voluntary gifts to the Russian functionaries, although these are commonly themselves in connivance with the smugglers. The very governor of Volhynia, Kommebourlei, was himself the chief smuggler; and the imperial senator, Sievers, notwithstanding all his honest zeal and his severity, could never succeed in finding the really guilty parties. When the functionaries are compromised, they generally select a scape-goat amongst themselves, who comes to his death by some violent means, and on whom all the guilt is heaped. Smuggling is punished (like murder or parricide) by banishment to Siberia, and the infliction of the knout; but when a trader is detected in the act of smuggling, it depends on these functionaries to save or punish him. On one occasion, a case of smuggling

being openly detected, a public victim became necessary. Some of the authorities being in league with the smugglers, pitched upon a poor driver, who was really knouted, and conducted into exile. When at the execution, a commissary of police was asked,—"How is it that this poor driver is made to suffer, instead of the real offender?" He replied, "How could you expect us to punish the other, when I myself clear a thousand roubles a year by him?" This scene took place at Vilna, and was recorded, because some years after, in 1824, the driver's family appealed to the justice of the Grand Duke Constantine. The police authorities, however, declared with effrontery, that the smuggler had also suffered the infliction of the knout, of which his body still bore the marks; and the driver's family were glad to escape the penalties of a false accusation against the authorities.

Such was the condition of Poland in the golden age of the Russian domination, whilst neither exposed to the systematic persecution by which Catherine sought to strike terror, nor to the ferocious outbreaks of Paul's gloomy temper; but during the period at which it enjoyed the countenance and favour of Alexander.

Towards the year 1818, the policy of that em-

peror had already become retrogressive; and irritated by the constitutional opposition of the diet, which the ruinous state of the finances had excited, he abandoned all attempts at popularity; and in the course of the three following years, had not only virtually abrogated the constitution, but commenced a reign of terror. After having, during the course of years, loudly reiterated his liberal intentions, he not only neglected to fulfil them, but gave rise to all the dangers of dissatisfaction, by openly retrograding; and then, thrown into a state of nervous terror by these difficulties of his own creation, he was easily led to endeavour to crush all resistance by a display of merciless severity. Not only did he violate personal liberty, establish a numerous secret police, and abolish liberty of the press, but the accused were tortured at their interrogation. The Grand Duke Constantine, the prototype of his father Paul, was allowed despotically to give the rein to his temper, and let loose as an instrument of punishment, whilst an imperial commissioner was dispatched with all the powers of a Roman proconsul, uniting in the person of the infamous Novosiltsof, the utmost depravity and cruelty, to a restless activity and Machiavelian duplicity.

It will be remembered that about this period Russia itself was still full of secret societies, many of which had formerly looked forward to Alexander as their warmest friend. In Germany, previous to the fall of Napoleon, these associations had been encouraged by the Austrian and Prussian despotisms, as having an anti-French tendency; and in Poland, Alexander had been anxious to encourage them, when still hopeful of uniting the whole Polish nation beneath his rule. The fermentation of secret societies in Poland had not, therefore, the same rebellious or dangerous signification as might be reasonably attributed to them at the present day; as their existence had never been forbidden, it was not concealed; the secret only extending, like that of freemasonry, to their institutions. The Polish youth then congregating in great numbers at the university of Wilna, had established many of these, amongst which the public society of the "Illuminati," and the two secret orders of the Philaretes and Philomates.

Though these three societies were dissolved as soon as strictly prohibited by ukase, the mania of forming secret associations spread amongst the juvenile members of the community, and school-boys of twelve and fourteen years of age entered

into conspiracies to uphold the threatened nationality of Poland by their literary efforts.

Alexander, who had encouraged secret societies, who had used his best endeavours to keep alive the nationality of Poland, and who had spontaneously declared, on the first establishment of the constitution, in the midst of the Polish diet, that he would unite the Polish provinces of Russia to the kingdom, and that he hoped to extend the benefits of a free government to every portion of the vast dominions he had been called to govern, now allowed Novosiltzof to enter on a career of persecution which, even amidst all the Polish people has since suffered, is still indelible in its recollection.

Not only did Novosiltzoff hunt out and punish all those who had formerly belonged to these associations before they were forbidden, but he adopted the Russian mode of political investigation, by torturing the accused, to elicit the truth; whilst Alexander confirmed their sentences of banishment. Novosiltzoff filled ten monasteries in the city of Vilna alone with youthful students. In every other part of Poland, the prisons were crowded with mere schoolboys. They were tried by courts-martial, and condemned to Siberia or to the mines, to confinement in the casemates of fortresses, or to

do duty in regiments in distant parts of the empire; and these mere children were sent off in irons by hundreds, amidst the heart-rending lamentations of their relatives. Though since that period such scenes have become common-place, the effect of this persecution has never been forgotten, and is frequently alluded to by the Polish poets.

All the normal schools were abolished. The Emperor Alexander declared by ukase, dated the 14th of August, 1824, that the condemned students had been guilty of high treason, in associating to perpetuate, by means of literature, the nationality of Poland.

From this time forward, the government, as it has ever since continued to do, avowedly identified all studious tendencies, and the spread of all instruction, with disloyalty. Any ardour exhibited in the pursuit of any kind of knowledge, or any habits of application, led directly to suspicion; and the treatment of every suspected student was nearly as bad as his punishment if proven guilty. Long imprisonment, hunger, cold, and the infliction of the lash were used with so much severity to elicit some avowal, that hundreds sank under this cruel usage.

Thus far, it will be said, the conduct of the

Russian authorities was only a repetition of the unscrupulous and energetic means which have been employed in many previous persecutions, but we have now to notice a diabolical line of policy, which, according to the present value of words, we can only stigmatise as Machiavelian; but which at a future day will be characterised as Russian.

To the the maxim of "divide and rule," was added that of "corrupt and rule."

The former professors and teachers were gradually removed from the universities and schools, and replaced by men, who appeared to have been chosen to give the Polish youth the example of every kind of dissipation and debauchery. Not only Novosiltzoff himself, but all the authorities to whom the superintendence of instruction was confided, seemed boastful of their crapulous orgies, anxious to propagate their degrading vices. There were no excesses, however morally and physically ruinous, to which the Polish youth were not encouraged to resort, by example, indulgence, and approbation; whilst all who resisted the pernicious influence, or who sought, however unobtrusively, to pursue their studies, were marked out as objects of persecution.

It would be impossible to believe in the premeditation and cold-blooded execution of such a scheme,

if the evidence of its existence reposed only on the character of Novosiltsof, and of a few of his agents; but from the time of his being dispatched to Vilna this policy became general, and was too openly avowed, too long continued, and too widely attested to admit of a doubt.

Like an over-dose of poison, it failed in the effects it was intended to produce. The odium which attached to the character of these agents, on account of their cruelty, and the sudden deaths and loathsome diseases to which several of them fell victims, made their example serve as a warning instead of inducing imitation.

The university of Vilna had attained to a high reputation under the curatorship of Prince Adam Czartoryski, a warm patron of learning, whose friendship with Alexander had given him the power, as well as the will of conducing to its prosperity. It happened just then to be crowded with many of the men who have since become the most remarkable in Poland.

This episode in the history of the persecutions which Poland has endured, has acquired a great importance, both from this cause and because there began the proscription of knowledge which afterwards extended, and has been since continued

throughout the country. It was here, too, that originated the idea which is so marked a feature in the Polish mind of the present day, and which speaks so cheeringly as to the future prospects of the nation; viz., that it is through the cultivation of knowledge, and the perpetuation of a national spirit in their literature, that its existence can be secured, and its eventual enfranchisement accomplished.

In 1825, Alexander died, after virtually abrogating the constitution of the Polish kingdom. The accession of his brother Nicholas gave rise to a rebellion in several parts of Russia, the mere explosion of a long-brooded conspiracy, of which the reader will find ample details in the first volume of Revelations of Russia.

The Russian conspirators having entered into communication with an association of Polish patriots, the reign of Nicholas commenced with a rigid investigation. Seventeen of his Polish subjects, from the Russianised provinces of Poland, were sent to St. Petersburg, and tried by the imperial senate, which condemned them all to Siberia. Eight in the kingdom of Poland were tried by the Polish senate, by whom, under the presidence of the dying Bielinski, they were

acquitted. Four years after their incarceration, and nine months after their acquittal, these men were set at liberty; but the venerable Stanislas Soltyk never rose from his bed after this long confinement.

Nicholas, however, commenced his reign by frankly telling the Poles that they had nothing to expect from him; and indignant at the acquittal of the accused conspirators, and the opposition of the diet, he determined to continue the system of severity to which Alexander had resorted. Constantine was allowed and encouraged to give the full rein to that ferocity which, resembling his father Paul's, like his, can only be attributed to insanity; and the country was exposed besides to all the oppression of a double secret police, each arbitrary in its power, and each mistrustful even of the other. The government, in fact, by its unendurable vexatious policy, fostered the very plots against which its severity was partially directed.

The conspiracy by which it was eventually overturned was so far advanced, that at the coronation of Nicholas at Warsaw, the expedient had been adopted by the conspirators, of freeing their country by the massacre of the imperial family, of which

all the members, as well as nearly every personage of note in the empire, were there assembled, and which defiled unconsciously between the students of the cadet schools, whose muskets were loaded with ball-cartridge, whilst every avenue of escape was occupied by the confederates. At the eleventh hour, a counter-order came from their chiefs, who were unwilling, on due reflection, to sully their cause by such a massacre; and the family of Romanoff was saved.

When the intelligence of the events of the three days of July in the French capital reached St. Petersburg and Warsaw, the hopes of the Poles, and the jealous vigilance of the government were raised to the highest pitch. Nicholas appears just to have determined to open a crusade against the revolutionary tendencies of the west, when surprised by the outbreak of the insurrection of Warsaw. The city rose.

The Grand Duke Constantine, suddenly attacked in his palace of the Belvedere, by a body of the cadet school, had only time to escape to a pavilion tenanted by his duchess, a Polish lady, Jane Grudzinska, whose benevolence had long tempered his violence, and for whom he had repudiated his first wife, and renounced the imperial throne. This retreat appears on her account to have been

respected, and hence Constantine made his way in safety, returning when he had collected a sufficient force to retake possession of it.

The next day, having encamped with eight thousand men under the walls of the city, he was visited in a small inn, in which he had taken up his quarters, by Lubecki, the minister of finance, Prince Adam Czartoryski, Ostrowski, and Joachim Lelewel, the historian.

Lubecki endeavoured to persuade the duke that it was only a popular outbreak, directed against some of the public functionaries; but the sturdy republican, Lelewel, told him bluntly that it was a national revolution. Two days afterwards, the whole kingdom was in a state of insurrection.

The kingdom of Poland, and some portions of the Russo-Polish provinces, having then enjoyed a short respite from the Russian yoke, or exchanged it for the horrors of war, which are everywhere deplorable,—in setting forth their condition under the house of Romanoff, we pass over the period of her revolution, and the two campaigns, of which the fatal termination restored her to the thrall of her oppressor.

We shall only observe, that notwithstanding the dearth of energetic generals to command its armies

and to profit by their intrepidity, the newly recovered independence of the country was lost in the council and the cabinet, not the field.

The stirring, youthful, and democratic, perhaps justly reproach the cautious, conservative, and aristocratic party, with having led to the ruin of the national cause, by neglecting to rouse or succour the Polish provinces without the kingdom. But it should be remembered, that, on the one hand, men were still scared by the recollection of the French revolution, and in the next, shamefully deceived by the diplomacy of the surrounding powers, whose hostility they were unwilling to provoke by any violation of the treaty of Vienna; and by whose promises they were betrayed.

I think it is Louis Blanc, who says justly, that they fell because they did not believe in the nation; but it is hard to reproach with this error in judgment, those who are expiating it in exile, when experience has taught them to disbelieve in all but their own exertions.

On the re-occupation of Poland by his armies, Nicholas abolished altogether the phantom of a constitution, which so many years previously had been virtually abrogated. He declared himself sovereign by right of conquest. The immediate

severities to which he gave way we shall not record, because of too common occurrence after the suppression of every rebellion.

An ukase, dated the 3rd July, 1834, condemned two hundred and eighty-six persons to capital punishments, who had been put on their trials a year before; pronouncing the same sentence on somewhere about the same number of fugitives.

This judgment was an absurd mockery, intended to deceive Europe. At the lowest computation, *fifty thousand* Poles had already by that time been sent to Siberia. The fate of all these victims generally remains unknown, but the running the gauntlet till death, of some hundreds at Cronstadt, may give some notion of the fate reserved to them.

Nevertheless, it is not with the unmerciful punishment of those who were his avowed enemies, that we shall at present interfere; it is the systematic oppression and punishment of a whole nation, carried to an extent which must defeat any repressive object, and savouring of the most inhuman vindictiveness, that we shall endeavour to stigmatise. Neither does the length of time which has elapsed since the conquest of Poland bring any alleviation of its suffering. There are two remark-

able and indisputable facts, which render the condition of this country more interesting to humanity at large, than any considerations derived either from the iniquity of its first partition, or the vindictive repression of its last attempt at independence; viz., that in the first place, Poland has been worse treated under Nicholas than at any period of the Russian domination; and secondly, that his rule, instead of becoming lighter, is growing daily more unendurable.

Setting aside cases of individual cruelty, the massacre of a few hundreds, or the transplantation of some thousands to the most desolating exile—abandoning them, for argument' sake, as sacrificed to the Moloch of necessity, it is to the woes of classes and masses that we would direct the sympathies of the reader.

The twenty millions of Poles, of which between thirteen and fourteen millions may be accounted as under the domination of Russia, are in round numbers divided nearly as follows:—

3 millions of nobles,
4 millions of burgers,
2 millions of Jews,
11 millions of peasants.

Let us first take the nobles, which in the Russian

dominions amount to considerably upwards of two millions, on account of their being in a much larger proportion to the inhabitants than in Russian-Poland.

It will be admitted by the most ardent levellers that a class of such numerical extent acquires, from that circumstance alone, an importance impossible to deny.

The Polish nobility is descended no doubt originally from a conquering race, so ancient that it probably belongs to a period antecedent to the diffusion of patents and diplomas, and in some of its most esteemed families is enjoyed by prescription. Amongst this people (as amongst the Spartans and Athenians) has always subsisted the principle of republican equality, though as with them, not extended to the people they had subdued. Through every change of fortune, this nobility continued inalienable; and the great majority of it had become so far reduced in circumstances, or had multiplied so much beyond its resources, that its members had become small farmers, noble peasants, or labourers.

Under the Russian domination, they had been divided into seven categories, or classes. To these, according to the number of proofs and documents the could furnish, they were adjudged to belong.

The qualification required for the first class was such as very few could unite; the next afforded greater facilities, and in the seventh were comprehended all those which had no written documents whatever to show, but who, on the oath of twelve registered noblemen, that they belonged to the body, were themselves enregistered. This seventh class alone united, therefore, many times more members than the other six, the sixth far more so than the fifth, and so on in succession.

By one of those sweeping ukases in which Nicholas is so fond of indulging, which affect the vital interests of hundreds of thousands, and of which we have no examples out of oriental despotisms, he abolished the privileges of four out of seven classes, at a single stroke of the pen.

If this had been the simple abolition of a right, or a pre-eminence exercised at the expense of other classes, although enjoyed from time immemorial, the injustice of its principle might have been called in question; but in fact, it reduces the nobleman (who perhaps would have been better designated as a free-man) to the condition of the serf; that is to say, he is wholly in the power of any Russian police official. One of those men who will extort bribes of half-pence, and make

arrangements with the lowest thieves, has the discretionary power of inflicting corporal punishment on him, at any time, without being amenable to blame or punishment.

The privelge of nobility in Poland, as in Russia, exempts from corporal punishments,—theoretically, in every case,—practically, always until condemnation and degradation, unless for political offences; for it is then unscrupulously used, not only as a means of punishment, but for extorting evidence, and confession of the truth.

Furthermore, occasional ukases direct that all such ex-nobles as have no lands, shall be forcedly removed to colonise the interior of Russia, or be incorporated with the Cossacks of the lines of the Caucasus, or enrolled in the the troops of the line.

Forty-five thousand families were thus removed by one ukase. The remainder continue entirely at the mercy of the authorities. In the most legitimate exercise of their functions, according to the instructions given them, when any proprietor of a small property dies, and his property comes to be divided between several children, they may seize sons for soldiers. Now it must not be forgotten that the disgrace and hardship of the soldier's

life in Russia, are such, that degradation to the ranks is considered as a punishment only inferior to the capital punishment of exile to Siberia.

Not only, therefore, has a great majority of the nobility been deprived of its privileges, and rendered liable to every indignity and humiliation, but poverty leads at once to exile; and this qualification of poverty the government has done its best to secure to them, by the most extensive confiscation of individual property which has occurred within many centuries, if we except the period of the French revolution.

A list of upwards of ten thousand estates confiscated, has appeared in the public documents; and as this proscription has fallen heavy on the wealthier proprietors, they are supposed at the lowest computation to amount in value to sixty millions sterling, whilst others rate them at nearly the double.

If we now turn to the burger class, it may be sufficient to state, that as far as their trade is concerned, they are exposed to more vexatious grievances than in an earlier part of this chapter they have been described as liable to, during the last year of Alexander's reign. As to their civil rights, the equality in the eye of the law, which Napoleon

had established, and Alexander solemnly confirmed, has been abolished. There remain the Hebrews and the peasantry. The great bulk of the Jewish people still inhabits Poland, which first offered the example of civil toleration, afterwards followed by Holland and Great Britain. It is true that in these latter countries there has succeeded a toleration of opinion, which has never yet arisen in Poland. Nevertheless, though the Hebrews had not been admitted to the full rights of citizenship, they had, on the other hand, hitherto been exempted from one of the most onerous of its charges—one which their prejudices rendered peculiarly odious—the military service. The Emperor Nicholas, distinguished by his strong personal antipathy to this people, has vigorously submitted them to the conscription, making the parents responsible in their persons and property for the appearance of the children—not only without conferring on them any equivalent rights, but exercising towards them a wholesale violence, such as the utmost rigour of Mahomedan despotism has never displayed in its most virulent prejudice.

Unable to stop the smuggling in the frontier governments, chiefly on account of the gross venality and collusion of his own agents, he fell, as

is well known, on the expedient of simultaneously transplanting into the interior of Russia a hundred thousand families. Those who could not get rid of their property within a given space of time, (which how should they do where all were sellers?) were to leave it in the care of the police, *to dispose of for them.* For all who have ever been in Russia, and know that the name of every branch of the police is synonymous with the utmost depravity, and the most flagrant dishonesty, there is an appearance of the most cynical derision in such a proposition. A stranger might as well confide his watch and purse to the swell-mob in London.

The next imperial interference with the Jews was to prohibit, under the penalty of a fine, the wearing the distinctive costume and beard which they have learned to consider as symbolical of the faith they profess, and to which previous ukases had, under other penalties, confined them. It may be imagined what a means of extortion this prohibition proves to the police, who have the charge of enforcing it.

There remains to consider the condition of the peasantry. In the Russo-Polish provinces,—that is to say, in those incorporated in the Russian em-

pire,—they continue in the slavery from which Alexander in 1818 forbade their masters to emancipate them. In the kingdom of Poland, where six-and-twenty years previously they had been enfranchised for ever by Napoleon, by the first article of the constitution of the grand duchy of Warsaw, which decreed equality in the eye of the law, Nicholas, the signer of treaties for the suppression of the slave-trade, in 1833, reduced them by ukase again virtually to the condition of serfs. It is meant here literally of serfs,—that is to say, to a state of servitude as it has existed in Poland, not to the absolute slavery of Russia, where practically a peasant is gambled away at cards, and transferred like a horse.

On the other hand, however, the Polish peasant is far more oppressed by the government authorities than even the Russian. For him there is no possible redress against the lowest and the meanest of his tyrants, because even his lord is divested of all interest. On a market-day, for instance, the fruits of his produce are unblushingly confiscated by anything that wears a Russian uniform. His best poultry is seized under the pretext that it is diseased,—his finest fruit and vegetables because unripe; and if he ventures one single murmur, he is pressed into

the public service, to work at paving or sweeping the streets for several days; leaving the remainder of his goods at the mercy of the police.

Having taken the chief classes of the Polish nation separately, to show that in the midst of its oppression, there has not been one which has benefitted by the sufferings of the other, let us now consider the conduct of the emperor towards them collectively.

In the first place, every effort is made at keeping under, and reducing the population. Every year a larger number of Poles, under different pretexts, are directed across the frontier.

No Pole, without a special permission, is permitted to marry before the age of thirty.

We have already seen that the nobility, deprived of their privileges by the sweeping ukase which abolished four out of the seven classes, may, at the discretion of the authorities, wherever destitute of competent property, be sent into the colonies, or incorporated in the Cossacks and the line.

An ukase, dated 1832, authorised the police to seize all children who were orphans, or the offspring of poor persons, to internate them into Russia, and bring them up in the Greek religion. In two

days, seven hundred were sent off to Warsaw, amidst the despair and imprecations of their parents, who followed till exhaustion obliged them to abandon the convoy.

The children of all those who had fought in the Polish armies were subjected to the same fate, and it is calculated that some thousands of those belonging to individuals who were obnoxious to the government, were seized in the bosoms of their families in a like manner.

Soon after this, a diabolical means was resorted to, of saving the police trouble, which, till known, was used throughout the country, particularly in the large towns.

Scarcity and famine, which embarrass other governments, proved a useful auxilliary to the Russian; and charity was used as the lure to reach its victims. The police declared that they were to draw up lists of the indigent, for the purpose of affording them relief in food, and remitting their burthens. All who were in that condition were invited to declare it. As soon as the lists appeared completed, the police, condemning the applicants on their own showing, relieved them indeed,—but it was of their children, who were thus collected without trouble. When this experiment was exhausted,

razzias were made in all the parochial schools of the large towns,—even in those of charitable institutions, the schools for the soldiers' children, and the foundling hospitals.

This constant drain of the inhabitants, but especially of the youth of the country, proceeds augmenting systematically. A larger number were transplanted in 1843 than in 1842, and a larger number in 1844 than in 1843. It is in pursuance of a plan for transplanting, as far as possible, the Polish population, and dispersing it over Russia. Of these children it is calculated that more than one-third never reach the place of their destination. In 1832 and 1833, before this service was organised, those that fell from exhaustion were abandoned by the road-side, with a few pounds of black bread beside them; and the number confided to the escort was recruited farther on.

All political conversation is forbidden. Even in the highest schools, it is not allowed to mention either the former or the last French revolution; they are called political changes, and *General Buonaparte* is represented as fighting under the orders of the Bourbons.

The proclamation of the vice-governor of Vilna, Doppelmeyer, says:—

"His excellency, the governor, having judged it necessary to prosecute and banish all those who become dangerous by spreading intelligence or opinions hurtful to the state, has ordered me to announce to all the authorities, that it is most essentially their duty to exercise a vigilant *surveillance* over all those under their orders, not only as regards their public or private life, but as to their connections of family and friendship. Those presiding over every branch of authority, in addressing to me such accounts as are founded on *simple conjecture*, are hereby directed to enlighten me by appending their opinions and observations on the case, so that, according to the degree of culpability of the accused, they may be either suspended in the exercise of their functions, or dismissed, tried, or merely placed under the surveillance of the police, arrested or shut up in fortresses, internated in a remote district of Russia, or sent to Siberia.

"If his excellency, the governor-general, should chance to become acquainted with the want of zeal, with the rash political judgments, or with the suspicious conduct either of a citizen or functionary, in such a case, the superiors of the accused parties, and those presiding over the branches of authority whose duty it is to look to these matters, will be severely

taken to task as to the reasons which have prevented them from hitherto reporting on such a personage. They will be removed from their respective situations, as incapable of fulfilling them, and will afterwards be made to undergo an exemplary punishment proportioned to the degree of culpability of the accused. These rules relate equally to Polish citizens, proprietors, and gentlemen."

The most barbarous and unjustifiable acts of the Russian government are commonly glossed over by the most specious pretences; it is therefore the contrary of those countries in which the bark of authority is worse than its bite; and yet, in the above public document, the principle is avowed of condemning the accused on conjecture; and the violation of all ties of blood and friendship, for the purpose of denouncing venal offences to the severest punishment, is not only openly enjoined, but enforced by the most stringent penalties. It is plain that there is danger for the authorities in not accusing on the faintest suspicion, whilst there is none in any number of groundless accusations.

Let it now be remembered, that the trial of the accused, unless by court-martial, is scarcely ever terminated before the expiration of one year, and frequently lasts four; and that for political offences,

corporal punishment is habitually resorted to, to extort the confession of the accused where evidence cannot be procured.

Let us now turn to the chapter of religious persecution. During the Polish struggle for independence, Pope Gregory the Sixteenth, losing sight of the interests and dignity of the pontiff in the anxieties of the petty prince of a turbulent domain, was induced by the representation and promises of Gargarin, the Russian ambassador, to disapprove of the revolution. Unmindful of the fact, that one of his predecessors (Paul) had said that each handful of the soil of Poland was a holy relic, because soaked in the blood of martyrs for their faith and their country; and that Clement the Thirteenth declared, while bestowing a benediction on the Polish nation, that the Catholic religion depended mainly for its security and its maintenance upon the preservation of the political existence of Poland, he issued an encyclical brief, dated the 9th of June, in which he summarily stigmatised the Polish patriots as evil-minded, enjoined the clergy to preach zealously, and to propagate the principles of submission amongst the people to their lawful sovereign, and closed with holding out to them the prospect that "your magnanimous emperor will

show you his clemency, and will listen to our representations and requests, to the manifest advantage of our Catholic religion, *which he has promised at all times to protect.*"

No sooner was the authority of Nicholas re-established in Poland, than he kept his promise, by setting on foot a system of persecution which gradually increased in intensity, till, in 1839, it was undertaken on a scale of unprecedented magnitude and severity. He determined forcibly to incorporate the United-Greeks, or Basilians, (that is to say, Roman Catholics to whom the papal see had allowed the marriage of the priesthood and other of the usages and ritual of the Eastern Church,) numbering three millions in his dominions, with the Russian Church.

Colonel Szyrma, to whose able exposition of the persecutive policy of the cabinet of St. Petersburg the reader is referred, observes very judiciously, that "the weakening of the papal power by the pope's own act, on the minds of the Poles, could not fail to prove highly injurious to his spiritual authority in Poland; it slackened the bonds of allegiance to Rome amongst the clergy, hitherto orthodox and obedient, and brought on apostacies amongst numbers of them; especially among those high prelates who had come in contact with the pope's new ally, the Tsar."

At the very moment that with fresh duplicity, Nicholas, by the hands of his son the Tsarevitch, was presenting to the pope a letter wherein he assured him of his supremest protection of the Roman Catholics in the empire, of the respect he bore for their conscience, and of his care for their welfare and peace, he had gained over their bishops to the dominant Russian church.

"They had finished," says Szyrma, "by signing an act of union on the 12th of February, 1839, for themselves and for the dioceses entrusted to their care. At once, 13,000 priests (contained in them) were forced to abjure Roman Catholicism, and conform to the new ritual presented tothem by their bishops. In most of the parishes a strong opposition was offered by the clergy, but all in vain; the recusant priests were expelled their parishes, and deprived of their livings; many were sent off to schismatic monasteries, and there incarcerated, with no food but bread and water; some had even that denied them, but remained in cold, damp dungeons, with starvation and death staring them in the face. Aged, venerable deans and canons were clad in clothes worn by menials, and obliged to do the lowest work of servants, and to eat with them at the same table. Many were thus brought to the

threshold of death, and wished for death; but no consolation of religion was allowed them. Through the walls of their dungeon they confessed to each other, imparted religious comfort and blessings; but when detected at this work of their faith, they were severely punished,—commonly flogged, and pitiably lacerated. Amongst these tortures, an aged abbot of eighty expired, and a venerable dean of seventy-one years of age died of sorrow and affliction.

"Up to the 6th of January, 170 of this clergy had fallen victims of this cruel and inhuman treatment. The younger portion who would not turn schismatics, had their heads shaved, and were sent as recruits to the Caucasian army.

"Trynkowski, the celebrated preacher, lost his senses, in consequence of the atrocious treatment he experienced at the hands of the governor of Wilna. Another, the dean Onacewich, persevered unaltered in his faith—unshaken by either the threats of Mouravief, governor of Grodno, or the penalties inflicted on him by his superiors; and amid these feelings his end approached; from his death-bed he cited the apostates and his tormentors to appear before the judgment-seat of God.

Besides the 170 victims recorded as having

amongst this clergy sunk beneath the persecution in Poland, the proportion of those who perish on the road to the place of their destination is very large, and their children are forced to embrace the Russo-Greek faith, (for marriage is allowed by the Church of Rome to the United-Greeks, or Basilian priests,) as in the case of Michael Wierzbicki, who expired on the road to Siberia. Of the few who reach the term of their long journey, the fate remains generally unknown; but it may be judged by one of the few instances in which any tidings ever reach their native country. The friar Sierocinski, exiled to Siberia because he would not imitate the apostacy of his bishop, was recently knouted to death at Tobolsk, when detected in secretly administering the sacrament to his fellow prisoners.

As to the congregations of these priests, the most shameless and cruel measures were adopted to force them to conform to the new faith.

The Emperor Nicholas, who at the close of the revolution, published a free pardon, with certain exceptions, to all who should return to their homes within a given time, expressing their contrition,—by a letter dated 6th of April 1832, instructed the

governor of Podolia to transport into Russia those who, trusting in his promise, had submitted.

But though so merciless towards those whom he had ranked in the class of most venial political offenders, and had allured into his power by solemn assurances of forgiveness, he offers by an ukase of the 2nd of January, 1839, *an absolute pardon to all Roman Catholics condemned for murder or theft to capital punishments, on condition of embracing the Greek faith.*

The peasantry were promised their freedom on the condition of apostacy; and a period of famine was taken advantage of, to offer them flour on the condition of their making three crosses on a register, to acknowledge its receipt. This register contained a general recantation, to which their mark was thus surreptitiously obtained; but as after this they were, by the terms of the ukase, considered as belonging to the Russo-Greek Church, from which any departure is capitally punished, they were thus utterly at the mercy of the authorities. In some places whole villages were driven into baths and barns, where they were smoked by lighted straw till they yielded.

A commission, composed of government agents and apostate priests, summoned the inhabitants of

the village of Worodzkof to appear before them, where they were sitting, about sixteen miles off. When before the commission they refused to sign their adherence to the new faith, they were ironed, thrown into baths filled with a fetid smoke, but without fire, in the severest weather. Here they were kept several days, without food, beaten and ill-treated, and being constantly informed that they would be sent to Witepsk, to be capitally punished. When many of them had fallen ill, they were forced to sign their adhesion; but immediately on their return exposed these facts in a petition signed by sixty-four of their number, nobles and peasants; but met with no redress; they were considered as irrevocably orthodox.

In one place, some hundreds of the peasantry having obstinately taken refuge on a frozen pond, the soldiers accompanying the Russian missions were directed to break the ice, and the unyielding wretches perished wholesale.

It was very rarely that the Emperor took any notice of the numerous petitions by which the sufferers assailed him; when he did so, it was in the spirit of his answer to the appeal made to him by a hundred and twenty ecclesiastics, which he

transmitted to their apostate bishop, with his command that he would severely punish their insubordination.

"To debar the new converts from any consolation, or return to their former religion," in the words of Szyrma, "Roman Catholic priests are forbidden, under the severest pains and penalties, to admit to confession, or to administer sacraments to any unknown person, or to persons from other parishes, even in case of the former being on their death-bed, except on production of a certificate from local authorities."

Against apostates, an ukase of the 21st of March, 1840, declares, besides the punishment already provided by law, that "their real, and all other property shall be confiscated; they cannot employ any orthodox peasantry, nor sojourn where orthodox people live. Their children shall be taken from them, and brought up in the orthodox church. The crime of apostacy shall not be confined to a moment, nor is it transitory, but permanent and continuous, until the apostate shall have returned to the orthodox church."

"The conduct of the government towards the poor and simple-minded peasantry," continues Szyrma, "was not less cruel than treacherous, and marked throughout with deceit. Entire parihses

were ordered to repair at one time to a fixed place, where commonly a Russian functionary, with a Greek priest, was awaiting, who presented them the cross to kiss, with the assurance that by the performance of that mere act of devotion, they were bound to nothing. A book was, however, kept in readiness, and whoever had kissed the cross was entered in it, and henceforth considered as a convert to the dominant church. On these occasions, no sermons, no words of persuasion were directed to the intended proselytes; but corn-brandy was liberally distributed to intoxicate them."

These religious recruits, whether drunk or sober, were as much bound as the clod who has received the queen's shilling from the recruiting sergeant.

By similar means, two millions of proselytes were enregistered as having accepted the Russo-Greek faith. Deprived of their own priests, and forced to attend the Greek service, these unfortunates meet by stealth in the woods and marshes. Whole congregations, after receiving the communion-bread, which they dare not refuse, keep it in their mouths without swallowing, to spit it out afterwards with horror. When Nicholas had produced this desired result he caused a medal to be struck, recording, in a simple and pathetic inscription, the incorporation of the United-Greeks with the orthodox church.

It ran as follows:—"Separated by violence in 1596, *re-united by love* in 1839."

Whilst these volumes are going through the press, a paragraph copied from the *Constitutionel* has gone the round of most of the London papers, announcing the arrival in Paris of a nun, one of the few survivors of a Roman Catholic convent in Poland, whose remaining community had perished the victims of a persecution so atrocious, that two or three years ago it would have appeared absurdly incredible; and even with all that has come to the author's knowledge of the barbarous rigour of the Russian government, he could not bring himself to believe it till due inquiry authenticated the horrible details, which at the close of the work will probably be given to the public.

The facts are briefly as follows. Thirty Roman Catholic nuns, living in the diocese of one of the apostate Basilian bishops, refused to embrace the Greek faith. They were seized, bound, driven before the whips of the Cossacs, and finally imprisoned in Greek convents. Here they were obliged to perform the most menial offices, starved, fed on salt food, and then given vinegar to assuage their thirst, and lastly flogged every third day. Twenty-three out of thirty expired in this manner

one of the number having her eyes literally torn out by the lash. The superior, one of the seven survivors spared by the pity of their executioners, is still at this moment in Paris, recruiting her strength in the convent of the Assumption, *impasse des vignes rue des postes*, before proceeding to Rome, where she has been called by the Pope. The reader should be informed, and bear in mind, that a rare chance revealed to the world this execrable barbarity. At the time that these harmless and helpless women were undergoing the first part of their inhuman and protracted martyrdom, the Emperor Nicholas, the author of this diabolic persecution, was received with welcome on our English shores; and his apologists should blush to remember, that whilst defending him, these poor females (and heaven knows how many more) were expiring in the most cruel tortures, mere units in the multitude of victims sacrificed to uphold a system which is not even intended to benefit one nation at the cost of another's suffering, but solely to further the interests of one family,—the family of Romanoff, in which the father has murdered the son, the wife her husband, and the son even in the present generation connived at the assassination of the father.

It should be remembered, too, that this persecution does not originate with the Greek church of Russia, which left to its owu impulses is one of the most apathetically indifferent to the conversion of the heterodox, but in the deliberate policy of its temporal head the emperor; and that not only it could never have taken place without his knowledge, concurrence, and permission; but that he must have sanctioned these as well as a host of such barbarities, if not by individual specification, by the general orders issued in such cases to the trembling subordinates of the church which he presides.

Such persecution, and such a state of things, which is not a matter of past history, but of present, hourly, and painful continuance, would have led to plots and conspiracies in any country. Poland is so rife with them, that it may be considered as a volcano threatening hourly an irruption. Where detected by the authorities, so numerous are they, that the detection of one or several of them answers no real purpose; whilst, on the other hand, what the corrupt officials cannot unravel, they invent, to prove their zeal to their superiors, who are aware that the storm is gathering somewhere.

In the month of August of last year, twenty-one conspirators were condemned to Siberia; in October,

eighty-two; and shortly after, an attempt was made to murder the police-master of Warsaw. Many arrestations were made; the accused were tortured in many ways, especially by giving them nothing but salted food, without water. Several were condemned to be knouted, and all died under the infliction; the executioner continuing to strike the dead bodies. Let us close this chapter of horrors; it may suffice to show that the Poles, without being turbulent, dissatisfied, or unruly, would be unworthy of the respect of Englishmen, if all their thoughts and energies were not directed to overthrow a domination of which they have had such terrible experience, and which still weighs like a fearful nightmare on their country.

There lives, in the very midst of our Europeon civilisation, a class of men towards whom all eyes are turned in Poland, the representatives of its imperishable nationality,—I mean the emigrants, the last relic of the gallant defenders of its independence, whose numbers are constantly recruited in their exile by all who can deceive the Russian vigilance, and share their honourable proscription.

This body, in which every shade of political opinion is represented, from the constitutionally monarchic and highly conservative party of Czar-

toryski, to the republicanism of Lelewel, and the democratic principles of the Democratic Society, is some day destined to play so prominent a part in the east of Europe, that it is worthy alike by its antecedents, and its future prospects, of our more intimate acquaintance. For this purpose a special chapter will be devoted, by one, who, in considering its subdivisions, has no partialities for any of the parties which they represent, but for whom they derive in common their interest as forming part of a whole, united in views and opinions on the two most important points connected with the future destiny of Poland: that is to say, in their determination to achieve at any cost the independence of their country, and the enfranchisement of the peasantry throughout its whole extent.

CHAPTER VI.

THE POLISH EMIGRATION.

Former Emigration—Celebrities of the present Parties, into which divided—The *united Emigration*, presided by Joachim Lelewel—His Character and Writings—Royalist Party—Czartoryski Family; Prince Adam Czartoryki; His Claims, followers, and prospects—The Democratic Society—The Religious Party—Association of Polish Priests for the Reformation of the Polish Clergy.

After the capture of Warsaw, and the occupation of the remainder of the kingdom of Poland by the Russians, above seventy thousand Poles were, at different points, driven across the frontier into the Prussian and Austrian territories. Of these, about 8,000 only succeeded in making their way westward; the rest being under different pretexts given up to Russia.

These who found refuge in the constitutional countries of western Europe, since reduced during thirteen years of exile to six thousand, now form the Polish emigration, towards which the eyes of the whole Polish people are turned, with hope and admiration.

Young men who can elude the vigilance of the Russian authorities constantly escape, to join and identify themselves with this band, whom the

opinion of their countrymen exalts as heroes and as martyrs. It should be remembered, that in Poland very different associations are connected with the name of emigration, to those which attach to it in the west. This appellation has not there been discredited by its application to a profligate nobility, abandoning without a struggle, the contest of most vital importance to their country, or profiting by its disasters to return with feelings, notions, and ideas which had become as obsolete as their knee-buckles, three-cornered hats, and queues; neither, by the appearance under such circumstances of the mere wanton and unquiet spirits of a country, driven by partial grievances to a reckless love of inconsiderate and destructive change.

Since its first partition, fifty years since, Poland has been accustomed to see all her most illustrious citizens in that condition: Kosciusko and Niemcewicz, then the first of Polish poets; Killinski the patriotic shoe-maker, side by side with the princely Potockis, only left their captivity to join the emigration.

Dombrowksi, as an emigrant, had formed abroad the celebrated Polish legions, the sword of the Cisalpine republic. When the French were driven from Italy by Suwarrow, three thousand of their number

fell at the battle of the Trebia alone. Dombrowski, with the wreck of the Cisalpine legions, then began forming those which in the service of Napoleon played so distinguished a part in all his battles. After an exile of ten years, during which the Polish people had seen with pride the names of the emigrants gloriously cited in so many lands, and on so many battle-fields, they had returned to their own country as the victorious vanguard of the army which drove out the Russians to establish the grand duchy of Warsaw.

Kosciusko, whose sagacity led him to mistrust alike the intentions of Napoleon and of Alexander, died as an emigrant.

The present emigration itself contains every kind of illustration. The veteran Malachowksi, and the venerable Niemcewicz, the friend and companion of Kosciusko, who recently died like him in a strange land, gave it the sanction of their historic names. Niemcewicz, the most celebrated Polish poet of the classic school, Mitzkiavitch (Mickiewicz), the greatest of the modern; and Lelewel, the first of Polish historians, besides many other distinguished writers,—so brilliantly represent its intellect, that three-fourths of the glories of the whole national literature are owing to men in the ranks of the present emigration. Abstracted and industrious

antiquarians join in it with veteran commanders, —old men averse to change, with the young and the hot-blooded. The austere Lelewel, the model of republican simplicity, is involved in a common exile with Adam Czartoryski, the intimate friend of princes, the munificent patron of learning, allied by blood to royal and reigning houses.

On the one hand, no set of men proscribed have ever so much distinguished themselves as this body; and on the other, all things considered, none have ever conducted themselves more creditably in the painful circumstances in which they have been placed. Observing a proper medium between the conduct of the French and of the Spanish emigrants, they have neither shown in misfortune the want of dignity of the former, nor the stolid pride which so often prevents the latter from seeking useful occupation. As a mass, they seem imbued with the idea of gleaning from the science and civilisation of the West, all that may be subsequently profitable to their country.

In proof of the intellectual tendency, which they regard with reason as the great antidote to the brute force which has subdued their independence, it may suffice to state that in France alone eleven newspapers are published in the Polish language, and exclusively supported by the Poles.

Wherever they establish themselves in any numbers, in the midst of all the difficulties of their position, they speedily manage to collect separate libraries for the use of those of different opinions. For instance, in Paris, where about seven hundred of the Poles inhabit, they have two public libraries, one of which contains twenty thousand volumes.

Though divided into several political parties, they are so unanimous in their confidence of returning to Poland, that although the United States offer them a refuge in which besides political hospitality they might find profitable employment, in many ways unattainable in Europe, still, so great is to them the draw-back of increased distance from Poland, that only about two hundred have repaired thither.

As regards their place of sojourn, about six hundred of these emigrants inhabit England. The facilities which their knowledge of the French language affords, and the great analogy of habits between the French and the higher classes of the Polish people, to say nothing of their frequent political and military association during the present century, have all concurred to lead the great majority to take up their residence in France, where they are computed to number upwards of five thousand.

They are, as regards political opinions, divided into four principal parties, which it is said may be numerically reckoned nearly as follows: The "*United Emigration*," under the presidence of Lelewel, 2,600; the Royalist party, presided by Czartoryski, about 700; the Democratic party, 1,000; the Theocratic party, about 50. Let us begin with the party which styles itself the— "*United Emigration*," represented by a council of eight members, under the presidence of Joachim Lelewel.

Lelewel, who had acquried a European celebrity as an antiquarian and historian, became equally renowned in Poland by his firmness as a patriot. Originally a professor at the university of Vilna, he perhaps owed his first popularity to the persecution which his uncompromising principles had drawn upon him from the Russian authorities, which led to his expulsion from his chair. The poet Mitzkiavitch, addressing him in an ode as his instructor, alludes to this circumstance.*

* The following are a few of the works of Lelewel:—Geographical and Historic Sketches.—Discoveries of the Greeks and Carthaginians on the Atlantic.—Pytheas of Marseilles, and the Discoveries of his Time.—Historic Essay on Polish Civil and Criminal Legislation.—The early Historians of Poland.—Remarks on the Polish Historian Matthew.—Parallel between

Retiring to Warsaw, he was nominated nuncio, or member of the diet, and appointed chairman to one of its committees. On the outbreak of the revolution, Lubecki, the minister of finance, (devoted to the Russians,) finding that the council of administration, which he presided, was losing all credit, called to it Lelewel and two other popular members.

On the day following the expulsion of the Grand Duke Constantine from the capital, he went in that capacity with Lubecki, Prince Adam Czartoryski, and Ostrowski, to visit the grand duke without the walls of the city, in the small inn of Vierzbna, in which he had taken up his quarters. Interrupting his courtier-like or temporising colleagues, he was the first bluntly to announce to the tyrannic viceroy, that his reign was at an end, and that the country was determined to throw off the yoke of Russia. This assurance decided Constantine to retire. The same night Lelewel,

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Spain and Poland in the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries.—Analysis of the Polish Constitutions of 1791, 1807, and 1815.—The Reign of Stanislaus Augustus.—Novosiltzof at Vilna—Diplomatic Interview between several Members of the Provisional Government and the Grand Duke Constantine.—History of Poland.—Numismatique du Moyen-âge.—Elements du type Gaulois et Celtique.—Baudulfus of Autun.—Coins of the Merovigianans, and of the Visigoth King Swintilla.—Numismatic and Archæologic Studies.

with Prince Adam Czartoryski and Dembinski. formed themselves into a provisional government, in which they called on Niemcewicz, Pac, Ostrowski, and Prince Radzivil to take part.

When it was afterwards decided by the diet that Poland should be a constitutional monarchy, five individuals were chosen jointly to represent, under the title of national government, the sovereign afterwards to be elected. As it was deemed most fitting to select men of all parties, Lelewel was chosen as the mouth-piece of the republicans.

It may sound strangely enough to hear of a republican of rigid principles, representing a monarch; but the Polish republic was always presided by a king, though far more limited in his power than the executive chief of the United States.

Lelewel's party was in diametric opposition to what has been termed the Diplomatic party; that is to say, to those who, deceived by the example of Belgium, hoped for the establishment and protection of the national independence from the hands of the great powers. Unwilling to irritate them, by giving any sign of revolutionary propagandism, they used all their efforts to confine the revolution to four or five millions, instead of seeking to spread it

amongst twenty. The same feeling led them to neglect resorting to the most powerful means of moving these formidable masses, that of proclaiming the freedom of the serfs in the Polish provinces incorporated with the Russian empire. It is well known that the Diplomatic, unhappily for the fate of Poland, triumphed over the Movement party. It has since been the first to acknowledge its error; and if all things are taken into consideration, it must be admitted that the alternative offered to a Polish politician during the last revolution, was one of singular difficulty.

It was necessary either to conciliate the great powers, to quiet the fear they entertained of revolutionary tendencies, and to interest their jealousy and their cupidity,—or else to rouse the whole Polish people to a war to the knife against three powerful states at once, between which it was divided. The futility of the former line of policy had not then been proved by the event, and whilst all intermediate course was clearly useless, the alternative appeared to entail so fearful a responsibility, that it cannot be wondered at, how so large majority should have hesitated to incur it, particularly when still under the impression then prevalent, of seeing re-enacted the horrors of the French revolution.

The country was in a crisis from which only the boldest measures could have extricated it, and all the most experienced men were wanting in that requisite daring.

As for Lelewel, placed at the head of a party by the respect which his learning, his virtues, and his undaunted civil courage inspired, he proved himself evidently unfitted to lead it. His talents were those least calculated for action,—his knowledge was rather the lore of the past than an acquaintance with men and things of the present day; and full himself of uncompromising integrity—somewhat mixed with the pedantry of the schoolman—he was unable to struggle with the cabals of faction, or to disentangle the good and evil which he found in men and measures. He might be compared to an antique patriot, calculated to shine in a Roman senate,—such as Roman patriots and senates appear in the pages of their historians, and through the long vista of centuries—suddenly transported into a modern constitutional assembly. He proved to be right in his views, but the opinions of such a man did not inspire the confidence which might have attended those of a more stirring and successful party leader, divested of his integrity, his talents, and antecedents.

It will, however, readily be understood, that Lelewel should have censured with natural bitterness those who compromised the fate of the country, by following a course diametrically opposed to that which he so strenuously advocated, and that the "diplomatic party" should feel the aggravation of failure increased by the reproaches of a man whom they looked upon as a pedagogic theorist. On this account, it is equally difficult to derive correct impressions, either of Lelewel from the accounts of the royalist party, or of the conduct of the latter from the pages of Lelewel.

After the suppression of the Polish revolution, Lelewel was placed nominally at the head of a party, the most numerous and the most comprehensive in the emigration. I say nominally, because, though perhaps the majority of his followers may entertain little confidence in his fitness as a leader, the name of this man, "*sans peur et sans reproche*," has been adopted, both as an honourable banner, and as a tribute justly due to his reputation and his services. In this respect, though no two men can offer greater differences of intellect and character, Lelewel may be compared to Lafayette.

The opinions of Lelewel, uncompromising and extreme as they may at first appear, in reality

serve as a point of union for many others, and hence the united emigration receives constant accessions to its numbers.

Though a sturdy republican and advocate of equality, the spirit of the antiquarian, who has lived chiefly in the past, preserves him from the tendencies of the leveller and experimental innovator. Wherever change is necessary, he loves rather to return to any means which can be drawn or compounded from the usages of by-gone times, than to venture on the untried and new. On this account, his veneration for all that is time-honoured, so that it be not radically bad, leads him to a toleration incomprehensible to the fiery school of French republicanism, bent on beginning everything anew; which, confounding liberty and equality, and sacrificing the former to the latter, has never yet succeeded in attaining any great degree of practical freedom, when the opportunity has been afforded of realising its theories, abstractedly so unlimited.

Lelewel would be content to let anything stand, so that it was not in the way of the interests or the liberties of the citizens; and his aim is the just one, of raising up the oppressed to the level of the favoured classes, instead of pulling down the favoured to the level of the oppressed.

His policy is too starched, unyielding, and artless,—he is too incapable both from principle and by disposition of bending to circumstances, and profiting by them, to render his means of action efficient; but though his immediate views may be prejudiced and narrow, the general principles which he advocates, and the end towards which they tend are wide, comprehensive, and full of truth. He will not consent to the egotistical idea of the enfranchisement of any part of the Polish nation at the sacrifice of the remainder. He will not confine his views to Poland alone, nor secure its independence by rousing its Roman Catholic feeling to religious antagonism with its Sclavonic brethren of the Greek persuasion. He will not, in his patriotism, neglect the fraternity either of the whole Sclavonic family between itself, or of all nations betwixt each other. Throughout Poland, not only the enfranchisement of the serfs, but their endowment with lands, is a *sine qua non* of the principles of his party.

These opinions, professed in it, have exercised a most salutary influence on the whole emigration; and whilst on the one hand it may be regretted that any differences should have existed in it, on the other, these have led to discussion, which has rendered the truth on certain points obvious to every

party; as, for instance, in the last-named question, of which the importance may be judged from the fact, that it identifies with the cause of national independence, eleven millions of peasants, by the strongest of human incentives, that of becoming from the bondsmen of the soil its free proprietors.

The general tenor of these volumes, by pointing out to the reader the present spirit of so many millions of the Sclavonic race, will explain the diversion which may be expected in the struggle on which Poland will sooner or later be called to enter, and the benefit which may hence accrue to her from evincing a feeling of fraternisation with the Sclavonians, instead of confining the popular sympathies within the narrow pale of religious and national exclusion.

Lelewel himself sometimes relates—and the assertion from his lips, for all who are acquainted with his life and character, is the most indisputable authority,—that some time prior to the revolution which expulsed the elder branch of the Bourbons from France *** was sent to him by Louis Philippe, then Duke of Orleans, to request his opinion as to the best means of conciliating republican institutions with monarchic forms; a request to which the historian acceded. Having subsequently taken up his abode in France, he was, at the demand of the

Russian embassy, expulsed from the French territory, on account of having appended his name to a protest made by a society which over he presided.

Taking up his wallet and his staff, he quitted Paris on foot, and bent his way towards Belgium. On approaching Lille, he was interrogated by a gendarme, who seeing on his passport the name of Joachim Lelewel, ex-member of the National Government of the Kingdom of Poland, could not believe that the dusty wayfarer before him was that personage, and took him into custody. He was led into the town, where he was speedily identified, and received with due honours by the inhabitants.

Lelewel now lives principally immersed in books. Incorruptible and uncompromising, the austere old man has shown the same dignity and equanimity, living in exile upon tenpence a day, as when the most popular member of the pentarchy, presiding over a nation. A party lives, acts, and thrives under the shadow of his name; and though it is neither probable nor desirable that he will ever be called to play any great political part, his country will some day raise statues to him as the Polish Aristides.

As a specimen of the style of Lelewel, when least severe and erudite; of his mode of reasoning by facts and figures, and of his opinions, it appears to the author that he cannot do better than subjoin the preface to his "History of the Regeneration of Poland," and the address by which he concludes it.

"Ten years ago, I wrote the history of Poland, addressed to my nephews. At this period my father was still living. He expired at the moment that every Polish heart was beating high with hope, and awakening to life at the outbreak of the last insurrection. Certain companions of my exile tell me, that they have learned from a traveller of the death of one of my nephews some time since. As to the remainder of my relatives, it is I who have ceased to live for them. It would be in vain for me to address, in vain that I should write to them. Neither my words nor writings could reach them. A cruel and powerful master—arrogating to himself possession of the earth they inhabit, of the air they breathe, and of the light and darkness which alternately spreads above them,—guards jealously all avenues to them. All access to them is, therefore, closed against my narration. Nevertheless, my thoughts, inseparably identified with those of my

countrymen who have fallen in the field, who linger in dungeons, or who have sought refuge in strange lands,—revert to the youth of Poland, both to that portion which was of age to take part in the last struggle, and to those on whom the country founds its best hopes as it progresses in the course of its regeneration. No human power can sever this connection of my thoughts.

"In briefly retracing the history of Poland since its fall, it is therefore to the rising generation that I address myself. Without knowing how, I feel convinced that somehow these pages will eventually reach it. Beloved children of my hapless country! I feel that my thoughts will become engraven on your memories, identified with your feelings; to you therefore I speak.

"The following picture of the Regeneration of Poland is only a sequel to the History of the Republic, addressed to my nephews ten years ago. Some differences will, no doubt, be discerned between the former and the present portion of the same work. These have arisen because the first part was composed, so to say, under the axe of a jealous censorship, whilst in the second, I have been speaking my thoughts without reserve.

"Another circumstance has also tended to place

me in a position different from the one I occupied in writing the history of a period antecedent to the fall of Poland. I was nine years of age at the time of the last partition of our country; its history could not therefore be really considered as contemporaneous for me. The events which I had to relate belonged, like the fall of the republic, already to the domain of past history. The actual period of the regeneration of Poland passing before our eyes, is not yet terminated. The life of the author—which has not, any more than the circumstances he is reviewing, yet drawn to its close—has been mixed up in the chain of events, as well as that of many of his countrymen who will listen to this recital. It has been my fate to play a part amongst men who were the chief actors in the last national movement, or who chiefly guided it. Amongst these there are many whose opinions differ from my own, whilst some have become my personal enemies. Now, in the following pages, it was needful for me to speak sometimes of myself, and more frequently of my adversaries. I was therefore placed in a peculiar situation, in which I had not found myself in relating the events of an antecedent period.

"I have hence been obliged to enter into greater

details than I could have wished. If I had too far abridged them, the recital would not have been clear. Perhaps, indeed, I ought to have entered on further explanations; and at least it would not be difficult to have written, as others have done, at greater length, with the facilities which the recent nature of events afford; but then it would no longer have been the brief narration which I must confide to the west wind, so that it may reach you, oh youth of Poland!"

CONCLUSION.

"In the midst of misfortune, with a heavy heart, I relate to you, my children, the sad events of the past; yet venture in the same breath to speak of the regeneration of Poland.

"Forty years of calamity are of course no better proof of this, than the length of a patient's malady would prove of his restoration to health. But when favourable symptoms become manifest even with increased suffering, no one can doubt of proximate cure. The increased energy of the continuous efforts which the Polish nation has made to shake off the yoke imposed upon it, is a sufficient proof that some day it will rise from its abasement. When a people repeats, full of faith, 'As long as we live, Poland will not perish;'—when it does not

despair of the salvation of the country;—when ever active, it rises after every interval of repose, redoubling in its efforts to break through its bonds, it cannot reasonably be doubted that such a people will recover its independence. Enlightened by a painful experience, it seeks to destroy the root of the evil which has caused its ruin, and to learn what is necessary to act with vigour and success; so that when it shall have acquired fresh strength, it will know how to put it profitably forth. We hear it commonly said, that we live in an age of revolutions, of social changes, and of progress. There is scarcely a corner of the continent of Europe, which is not undermined by a revolutionary volcano. From the Tagus to the mouths of the Wolga, in France, Germany, Turkey, Greece, and Russia, everywhere a spirit of agitation is brooding, which demands reforms, the franchise of all classes, and the liberation of all nations. When such a march of the human mind has been incessantly manifested during seventy consecutive years, by reiterated commotions, which have not resulted in any definite end, others must irrevocably follow, which, sooner or later, will effect the emancipation, and establish the liberties of all races; and it is obvious that no opposing force will have the power

eventually to stay such an event. The social amelioration of Poland had commenced before its fall. The spoilers who oppress mankind, and who divided it, have proclaimed this fact, vociferating against her the most shameless calumnies; but their clamours, far from impeding, only accelerate the advent of a new era for the country.

"For my own part, I shall confine myself to indicating the growth of the national strength in proportion to the progress of amelioration. About ninety years ago, at the time of the confederation of Bar, the nobility alone valiantly made head against the enemy. Numbering only eight thousand men in the field, it fought against several armies. Some privileges having been since accorded to the burghers, and the condition of other classes having excited some attention, Poland, diminished by its first partition, set on foot sixty thousand men. With its territory shrunk into still narrower limits, forty-three years ago, it set on foot thirty thousand men under Kosciusko, besides arming all classes of the people, and especially the inhabitants of the chief cities, for the national defence. At a subsequent date, thirty years ago, the country still further diminished, on account of the portion ceded to the King of Prussia,

raised an army of thirty thousand men; and five-and-twenty years ago, the duchy of Warsaw, which was no larger, put on foot one of eighty thousand, full of ardour, because inspired with the spirit of social reforms.

"In the last revolution, the Tsarian kingdom, further reduced in extent, raised eighty thousand regulars, to say nothing of the armed population, amounting at the least to fifty thousand. And yet this last outbreak covered a less extent of territory than Kosciusko's insurrection. If Kosciusko and the Pulaskis, instead of thirty-eight thousand men, had had a hundred and thirty thousand, as in the last war, what might they not have done? Nothing but wilful blindness can deny this enormous growth of the national strength. It is evident that in the midst of reverses, the combatants increase in number in every struggle; and when the nation learns to comprehend its true interests, it will see that they repose on social reforms and on the progress and emancipation of humanity."

The Royalist party of the emigration is so called, not because merely composed of the advocates of monarchic principles, but as designating the partisans of a family, who in the midst of exile,

have conferred upon it the honours of embryo royalty.

A body of the emigrants, amounting to between five and seven hundred, have fixed on the family of the Princes Czartoryski as the future constitutional sovereigns of Poland. Although in their present position they do not bruit this tacit election, they affect the same loyalty towards them as the most uncompromising legitimatists of France to the Duke de Bordeaux, or the late Carlists of Spain to the Count de Montemolin, since the renouncement by Don Carlos of his rights in favour of his son.

At the first glance, there appears something strikingly ludicrous in this Polish dynasty, which has never had existence till founded, so to say, in the streets of London and of Paris.

It may besides be added, that the Poles opposed to it aver, with perfect truth, firstly, that it was the very family of the Czartoryskis which made a fatal appeal to the Empress Catherine, and originally called in the Russians. Secondly, that Prince Adam Czartoryski, the present head of this house, is one of the few men, who, according to the old laws of Poland, cannot offer himself as a candidate for the national throne, to which any freeman, whether

foreign or native, might pretend, with the exception of such Poles as had served a foreign government. Now, Prince Adam having formerly accepted from the Emperor Alexander the dignities of Russian minister and senator, has placed himself in the category of those excluded. Thirdly, they say that Prince Adam, who has now been persuaded to accept the future crown of Poland, was already a man too old, timid, and irresolute to assume it during the last revolution, when it depended entirely on himself to have done so; at a period when, a member of the national government, his party influenced the diet to proclaim Poland a constitutional monarchy, by a decree of the 8th of February, 1831.

This man, now further broken by years of exile and disappointment, is the present chief of his house, whilst his next heirs are scarcely emerging from childhood.

All this is true, and yet perhaps, notwithstanding, neither the expulsed dynasties of England, Sweden, France, Spain, or Portugal, ever stood so fair a chance of restoration, to the thrones from which they had been expulsed, as this noble Polish family, represented by an old man and two children, to the constitutional sovereignty of their country.

In the first place, it is to be observed, that the idea of monarchy in Poland, where native monarchy

has often been perniciously impotent, but never despotic, does not recall the same associations as in other European countries. The most uncompromising republican can perfectly reconcile in his mind, republican institutions with monarchic forms, whilst the most devoted partisans, either of aristocratic privilege or of monarchy, never dream of it, otherwise than constitutionally and effectively limited.

The national feeling of Poland may be divided, as to whether it shall be elective or hereditary; whether restrained within the former limits of its power, or allowed a more enlarged scope of action, as in the states of western Europe. There may be even some still undecided between a native or a foreign dynasty, but there is no party seriously or radically opposed to the institution of the kingly office.

The failure of elective monarchy at the time of Poland's independence, and the success of that which has been hereditarily established in so many of the kingdoms of western Europe, has neccessarily inclined the majority of thinking men to a preference of the latter. The same experience, derived from their own history, has also gone far towards imbuing them with the desire of a native instead of a foreign family, to preside the national government.

Now, amongst the Polish families, none could be, on the whole, more popular than the Czartoryskis. In point of birth, which is still something with one part of the Polish nation, whilst it is no drawback with the remainder, the princes of this house may vie with any in Europe. Descended from the grand dukes of Lithuania, and from the Jagellons,* who occupied the throne of Poland, their ancestors held sovereign sway whilst the Romanoffs, the forefathers of Nicholas, were still buried in obscurity. Allied to the Poniatowskis, who gave the last king to Poland prior to its partition—amongst their modern connexions, it may suffice to indicate their relationship by marriage with the imperial family of Russia, and the royal family of France. On the other hand, though it may be true that they first called in, and have constantly favoured the Russian influence, up to a recent period; still, even their

* Lelewel says, that with regard to the Czartoryskis, they can only derive their origin in any case from a collateral branch, the house of Jagellon having become extinct in 1572. "All who pretend to belong to it, descend therefore from Gedemin, grandfather of Jagellon. Many of the collateral branches are extinct, and others pretend to be so without foundation. I could name certain erudite genealogists, who explicitly contest the supposed descent of the Czartoryskis from Jagellon's brother, and the family of Gedemin."

This observation of Lelewel's, hostile to the pretensions of the Czartoryskis, suffices to establish the popular belief in the derivation of their origin from the Jagellons.

bitterest enemies have never accused them of any want of patriotism.

In seeking the alliance of Russia, about 1764, at the period of what was called the Czartoryski confederation, it is admitted by their adversaries, that their object was to expulse Augustus the Third, and to establish a native and hereditary dynasty. For this purpose, they thought merely to make use of Russia to forward ends, which, if selfish, were at the same time patriotic; but, on the contrary, they were made the tools of Russia. Then already, as they have subsequently continued to do, they had endeavoured to acquire political influence, by devoting a colossal fortune, in the most noble manner, to the patronage of art, and to the dissemination of enlightenment. Perhaps no royal house in Europe, of their time, has, even with means incomparably greater at command, so munificently encouraged science and art, genius and learning. Not only their fortune, but such power as they succeeded in obtaining, was applied to purposes equally generous. Already in 1784, through their instrumentality, many laws were passed to protect the serf; and shortly afterwards, a decree, which made it death for a nobleman to kill a peasant,—a penalty by which the latter is not yet protected in Russia, at the present hour. As

well as the Poniatowskis and the Zamoiskis, they already, at that early period, emancipated the serfs of their domains; affording thus, half a century ago, an example which the Russian emperors have not yet followed.

The present Prince Adam Czartoryski, son of the starost-general of Podolia, succeeded in his early youth in acquiring the friendship and the confidence of the Emperor Alexander, whose minister and favourite he became. The influence thus obtained he devoted unremittingly to the benefit of Poland. He got named curator of the university of Vilna, and of all the schools throughout the Polish provinces incorporated with the Russian empire; comprising then about a third of the whole Polish people. Through the instrumentality of his credit with Alexander, he was enabled to raise this seat of learning to an unprecedented pitch of prosperity; and his first care was to insure the existence of the national schools, by placing them beyond the reach of Russian spoliation.

As soon, however, as Napoleon had erected some of the other provinces into the duchy of Warsaw, and that there was an independent Poland to resort to, he abandoned all the power and honours he enjoyed as friend and favourite of the youthful em-

peror, whilst at the same his father quitted the service of Austria, in whose armies he held the rank of field-marshal, and came to open at Warsaw the diet of 1812, which proclaimed the independence of Lithuania, and its incorporation with the grand duchy.

On the re-occupation of Poland by the Russians, Prince Adam prepared a constitution, which was found too aristocratic both by Alexander and by his countrymen, whose ideas were just then strongly tinctured with French opinions; for it is to be observed, that a despotism is less hateful to a democracy, and the feeling of a despot becomes more easily reconciled to a democracy, than to any thing savouring of oligarchy. Prince Adam continued, nevertheless, long to enjoy the confidence of the emperor, and to use the influence thence derived in the same manner as his fortune, according to the traditions of his house, for the propagation of knowledge, and to further the enlightenment of his fellow-citizens.

There are now in the emigration many distinguished *literati*, who owe their education and acquirements to the discriminating munificence of this nobleman, who, without distinction of political opinion, always held out a hand to humble or struggling merit.

At length, however, his credit gradually diminished; and he was deprived of his curatorship of the university of Vilna, From the time that Alexander changed his policy towards Poland, and entered on a career of persecution, he may be said to have retired from public life, until the outbreak of the last revolution.

During the revolution itself, as a member of the government, it is true that his conduct was a tissue of weaknesses and blunders; but in extenuation, it must not be forgotten that an inordinate degree of moral courage was required to enter on the only course that could have saved the nation; and that in this the daring veterans of the battle-field, such as Clopitski (Chlopicki), Skrynetski (Skrzynecki), and Dembinski, were as much wanting as himself. As to the error of relying upon foreign aid, and cramping the national spirit to propitiate foreign favour, it is an error unhappily shared in common with him by all who had it in their power to influence the destinies of Poland in the senate or the field.

Prince Adam, though neither a man of genius nor of firmness, unites, perhaps better than if he possessed them, the requisites for a constitutional sovereign; and though now personally little fitted

to attend to the interests of his house, any more than his youthful successors, these are ably cared for by his nephew, an enterprising soldier in the flower of age, and the inheritor of the great name of Zamoyiski, in whose favour the only entail in the kingdom of Poland has been preserved.

The family of Czartoryski, honoured rather for its princely virtues, than for any talents, is, therefore, to those we should call in England the high Tory and Conservative emigrants, what Lelewel is to the men who gather round him,—hitherto a mere banner; and if Poland should to-morrow shake off the yoke which weighs upon it, the one may be laid aside with veneration, like a glorious, but useless trophy, in which men take pride; whilst they may plant the other, like the symbolic standard, the point of union round which a nation gathers, and the pivot on which a system more or less liberal may revolve. Amongst the distinguished partisans of this family, there immediately occurs to the author, the late venerable Niemcewicz, Colonel Schirma (Szyrma), brought up at Oxford, and who being at the outbreak of the revolution, professor of English literature at the University of Warsaw, took arms at the head of his students; the young and promising poet, Olizarowski; the

bibliophilist, Sienkiewicz, who has succeeded in collecting for the use of his countrymen in Paris a library of twenty thousand volumes; and I believe I may also rank as belonging to this party, the savant Jastremski (Jastrzenbski), who first decyphered the celebrated manuscript book of Rheims, used at the coronation of the kings of France, which had hitherto puzzled the learned, and which he declared, and proved by translating it, to be a dialect of the Sclavonic, but written in the characters called *glagolitic*, (of which the invention is attributed to St. Jerome,) first used by those who had reduced that language to writing, and afterwards abandoned for the Cyrillian. He is now employed by the French government to make researches in the libraries of Rome. C. Hoffman, and the abbé Pranievitch, are both at least very zealous writers in favour of the same cause.

The third party styles itself the Democratic Society, and consists of somewhere about a thousand members, under the presidence of Malinoski.

They have in Paris a public library of their own; and Mieroslavski, the author of the history of Napoleon, is a distinguished member of their party.

Their opinions are those which the liberals of

Spain, Portugal, Italy, and many other countries have copied from the ideas prevalent in the French school of ultra-liberalism. Liberty is, of course, the goal towards which, in common with so many political parties, they aspire, but inseparably with equality; and adopting centralisation as a means of attaining and preserving both. They are, therefore, somewhat unmindful of the examples afforded them by those in whose steps they seem desirous of treading, how liberty and equality may be confounded; and how much more easily the latter is established, in conjunction with despotism, than a state of freedom; that there was more equality in the reign of terror, and that more exists in Russia now, before the knout, than beneath the freest governments.

They are apt to forget that centralisation is merely a means of augmenting the strength of a government, which may be useful when, from its weakness, the very independence of a country is threatened; but can never be permanently maintained, except at the expense of some of its liberties —a means which is more favourable to the development of arbitrary power than to the administration of a constitutional or republican state,—a system which has flourished for ages in China,—which, first introduced into Europe from the nccessity of

self-preservation by the French republic, prepared the nation for the ensuing despotism—which was next enthusiastically adopted by the Russian Tsars, —which of all the novelties of the West has most captivated the imagination of the Ottoman Porte, —and which, introduced into South America, Spain, and Portugal, at the same time as ideas of freedom, like the tares scattered into the furrow with the wheat, has hitherto cramped and strangled the latter in its growth, and perhaps mainly contributed to reduce those countries to their present condition.

This Democratic Society, besides, comprises all who have a tendency to communist ideas; and it has become a refuge for the generous, who, in their abhorrence of real and deeply-rooted social abuses, are enthusiastic in their advocacy of untried and often chimerical remedies.

Prone to begin everything anew, and to sweep down and level what might be with much less difficulty applied to its own ends, this party is composed of men the least practical, if, perhaps, the most active in the emigration.

The application of French ideas of liberalism,—I mean as understood by the majority of those who profess them in that country, full of intolerance for

all prejudices and usages but their own,—would probably prove more fatal, and certainly more difficult in Poland than it did in Spain, where for so many years the constitution was identified in the minds of the peasantry with ideas of civic tyranny and of arbitrary centralisation, from which they had never before suffered in their self-governed villages; so that many a bold peasant, with the cry of Long live the absolute king upon his lips, fought and died for the freedom he had always enjoyed till liberty and a constitution were proclaimed.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that a blind bigotry to the liberalism of France, with its two or three great truths, and numerous errors, is more readily to be accounted for and excused in a Pole, both as a matter of feeling and political expediency, than in a Spaniard, an Italian, or a German.

With striking differences, there exist at the same time stronger analogies of disposition between the French and Poles (or at least the noble class of the Poles), than the former exhibit to any other people. The customs, language, and usages of France are familiar to this portion of the Polish nation. Since its first subjugation it has been accustomed to look with the eye of hope towards France, especially towards

revolutionary France. It has fought in its armies, shared in its glories and reverses; it has received some solid benefits from its governments, and though betrayed and sacrificed by all in turn, from the French people it has met with unvarying sympathy and kindness. It is not, therefore, remarkable that we may rank the partiality of the Polish people for the French beside that of the Finnish people for the Swedish, as the only two national friendships whose reality will stand the test of narrow scrutiny; nor that some of the children of the one country, oppressed and suffering, should implicitly take the tone of their opinions from the other, which is prosperous and free.

As a matter of policy, Poland has more than any other country to expect from the ultra-liberal party of France,—if only by its agency on its own government, and by the fact that its clamours may in some future struggle force it to keep two of the despoiling powers in check.

It must at the same time be explained, that although such deep sources of sympathy exist between the Poles and French, there are causes of dissonance no less profound, which must inevitably prevent the application of principles of democracy and infidelity, even by those who may adopt them in their fullest extension.

The Polish nation is more eminently aristocratic and religious than the British. In France, the middle and lower orders have far outshone the aristocracy; in Spain and Sweden, the aristocracy has sunk beneath the lower and middle classes; and in all these countries, the national contempt has killed and withered it irrecoverably; so that it is now a thing without sap, root, or life. In Poland, as in England, to glaring vices and defects, its nobility unites so much of virtue and of talent, that there are few men born out of that class, who with all its faults, can lay their hands upon their hearts and say that they would not be proud to be included in it. The Polish nobility derives, besides, an importance from the fact that it constitutes upwards of one-seventh of the whole nation, and comprises nearly all the cultivation of its intellect.

It is to this class that nearly all the members of the Democratic Society themselves belong, though I fear they may not thank me for the suggestion.

Though these nobles, three millions in number, are evidently of a race perfectly distinct from the remainder of the nation, this distinction is as completely forgotten, both by them and by the people, as that for ages lost of the Gauls and Franks in France. If there are moral as well as physical

differences to be observed between them and the bulk of the Polish people, they at least resemble it in their tendency to religious exaltation. As to the people, the author could name several who, whilst sharing the opinions of this society, are convinced that nothing in Poland itself will stir the peasantry to a unanimous effort, but an appeal to its religious feeling.

Though, therefore, many of the members of the Democratic Society may adopt with their characteristic warmth the ideas of the French liberalism of the close of the last century, the general absence amongst them of the religious indifference, and of the heartfelt love of equality on which a certain school of French political philosophy is founded, are two negative elements, which render them unfitted for successful propagandism of its doctrines; whilst the bulk of the people is pre-eminently indisposed to be acted on by such an agency

The fourth, sometimes termed the Theocratic party, is accused of being a mere militia of the Roman see. It professes to effect, through the agency of religious zeal, the regeneration of its country; and even if it were true that its eventual interests are Romish rather than national, it is indisputable that its primary object is that of shaking

off the Russian yoke, which weighs so heavily on its church in Poland, must be identical with the views of all Polish patriots. This party does not probably number fifty members amongst the emigration; and hence at first sight it may appear little more worthy of attention than the sect of Tovianski with his sixty followers, led away by the example of Mitzkiavitch (Mickiewicz) the great poet. But if it does not number fifty members in the emigration, it derives incalculable importance from its influence with eleven millions of the Polish peasantry, and by its interest with the whole Roman Catholic world.

It is a singular fact that it has derived a vast ccession of power from the very acts of Nicholas himself, whose vindictive persecution of the religious faith of his Polish victims, has inspired the peasantry with a degree of exaltation which may at any moment be acted upon, to rouse them with a unanimity which could never before have been attained.

Lelewel has shown, and none gainsay the truth of his assertions, that, in the struggles which, since its first subjugation, Poland has at intervals renewed, at first only some of its nobles, and gradually other classes have taken part; but hitherto there

has been no general movement throughout the whole Polish people; and all are agreed with him as to the immense accession of strength hence to be derived by the Polish cause. Lelewel and his followers, as well as the Democratic Society, regard the enfranchisement and endowment of the peasantry with the land they occupy, and the participation by this class of eligibility to all imaginable offices, as the most powerful means of rousing it to action.

The religious party, on the contrary, without neglecting to avail itself of, or repudiating these, consider them of insignificant importance beside their own project of making an appeal to the religious feeling of the serfs, and of beating down, with crucifix in hand, the double-headed eagle.

The Dynastic party consider each of these means as valuable to the attainment of a common end; and it will thus be perceived that all these political sects into which the refugees are divided, are merely labourers in the same vineyard, each in his peculiar way tending to the advancement of the national cause; and who, whilst prone to undervalue, have no cause to impede each others' exertions.

As regards the religious party, those who have had the most experience of the popular feeling of

Poland, amongst which, some, who have recently quitted that country, or who have taken part in the political missions thither subsequent to the reoccupation of the latter by the Russians, even when themselves following another banner, admit that this is the most powerful means of action on the peasantry, whilst one every day increasing in importance. "In 1833," says one of these men, "when I addressed the peasantry of the villages, I found them animated by a profound hatred to the Russians; but at the same time so daunted with the national ill fortune ever since the memory of the most aged could recal the past, that they were either without confidence in the success of insurrection, or without belief in the truth or stability of the social reform which I announced to them.

In the grand duchy of Warsaw alone, had they seen the freedom of the peasantry carried into execution. Their dependence on their former lords, and their own ignorance, had prevented them from enjoying the full benefit of the boon conferred upon them by Napoleon, and confirmed by Alexander, whilst such as it was, they had seen it abolished by Nicholas in that portion of the grand duchy which fell to the share of Russia.

I do not mean to say that a portion of them

was not eveywhere willing to rise, but there was neither unanimity nor stability in their enthusiasm. In the year 1835, I was struck by seeing the whole population of a village bow at mass simultaneously, with vivid faith and unfeigned devotion at the elevation of the host. Here, thought I, is the whole mass of the people of this district moved by one idea, by which it is ineradicably possessed, why should I not seek to act by its intermedium, instead of wasting time in an endeavour to inspire them with a confidence so difficult to implant either lastingly or universally.

"Pursuing this idea, I ceased my apostleship as a propagandist of social reform, and in the next village addressed them in the name of Christ. I found the effect of this electrical, and experience soon taught me that with all this class an appeal to its religious feeling affords an unfailing lever, of which the power gains daily strength by persecution, and which is nothing impaired by the addition of such considerations as I formerly adduced."

Besides its home and foreign influence, though so limited in number, this party boasts of remarkable illustrations. Mitzkiavitch, before the morbid turn which his religious fervour has taken, belonged to it, as still does Count Krasinski, the author of The Infernal Ccomedy.

Skrynetzski (Skrzynecki), the commander in chief of the Polish armies, and the victor of the Russians in several sanguinary battles, is one of its most devoted adherents. His name has become historic from the part he was called to play in so gigantic and important a struggle, and his talent as a tactician has been frequently lauded, though he signally failed, both in taking advantage of his victories and in his stratagetic movements; whether from want of skill as a strategician, or from deference to the opinions of the Diplomatic party, who feared successes that might have scared away the expected intervention of the stranger,—or from both these causes, it is impossible to determine.

Zaleski, another of the modern Polish poets, whom Mitzkiavitch somewhere addresses as the nightingale, and to whom the harmony of Moore and Lamartine is attributed by his admirers, is numbered in their ranks. At their head is a new religious order, hitherto consisting of a congregation of nine Polish priests, all young men, who played an energetic part in the revolution, and who having since taken holy orders, were first instigated by Mitzkiavitch, whom they look on as a fallen angel, to form the present association, for which they

received the sanction of the papal see, and of which the avowed object is to provide means for the reformation and instruction of the Polish clergy. Their superior is the reverend father Semelenko, formerly one of the Carbonari, a man in the flower of age, active, enterprising, and at least so distinguished as a theologian that when he turned his attention towards the church, he bore off in triumph the prize medal awarded for theologic knowledge and acuteness, at the great concourse held at Rome, for which the candidates for clerical honours of the whole Romish church, with its hundred and fifty millions of communicants, contend.

The Abbé Kaisevitch, whose face bears the indelible mark of a Cossack sabre, which has nearly severed it in twain, and who pronounced the funeral sermon at the burial of Kosciusko's friend,—the greatest and last of the Polish classic poets, the veteran Nemciewicz,—is the mouth-piece of the congregation for oral eloquence; whilst the layman Vielogloski, a Polish gentleman, who formerly set the example of freeing and endowing the serfs of his domain, and a contributor to the columns of the *Univers*, defends its opinions in his own pe-

culiar glowing and poetic prose, from which an extract will be subjoined at the close of these volumes, both on account of its intrinsic beauty, and as an exposition of the views and feelings of his party.

CHAPTER VII.

ATTEMPTS OF THE EMIGRANTS IN 1833 AND 1836.

Atttemp made by forty Polish Emigrants in 1833—Death of Zavisa, Vinitski, &c.—Mademoiselle Kavecka hanged by the Russians—Death of the Countess Emilia Plater, at the head of a Regiment she raised and commanded—Polish Women—Address of Mitzkiavitch to the Polish mother.—Second attempt by Konarski and the Zaleskis in 1836.—Capture of the Elder, escape of the Younger Zaleski—Capture and Martyrdom of Konarski; His fetters made into rings, and worn by the Russian Officers.

In the year 1833, a small body of Polish emigrants — forty in number—determined to attempt a fresh insurrection in Poland.

"It may be asked," says one of them, in an unpublished M.S., "how forty men could be found at once, so rash and inconsiderate as to attempt to plunge their country afresh into the horrors of war, so short a time after the failure of a national effort, made with an organized government, and regular armies, to establish its independence,—in fact, whilst the ashes of the

viliages destroyed in the struggle were scarce yet cold, the blood spilled scarce yet effaced from the surface of the soil.

"There was, however, at that moment, every reasonable ground to believe that Europe was on the eve of a great commotion. The French ministry ostensibly encouraged a gathering on the Spanish frontier; Italy was fermenting; the Belgian question still unsettled; and the political societies throughout Europe, with whom the emigrants were in communication, bent on a proximate movement, which would have rendered a general war inevitable.

"In Poland, a sufficient time had elapsed to prove to its inhabitants that the cruelty of the conqueror was not occasioned by the intemperance common in the first flush of victory, but resulted from a system of violence and terror prospectively devised, which aimed at the gradual subversion of the national faith, language, spirit, and institutions, even through extinction of the inhabitants. It appeared, therefore, an enterprise as full of hope as it was of peril, to prepare the population so that it might be enabled to take due advantage of the great events expected."

It may be readily imagined that none but the

most daring would undertake so desperate a mission; and accordingly, this devoted band displayed a hardihood and courage rarely parallelled in history. Their leader was Colonel Joseph Zalivski, the same who in 1830 had, with Vysocki and Urbanski, presided the conspiracy which drove the Russians from the capital. His thirty-nine associates, of whom twenty-nine eventually perished in this expedition, were chosen as uniting to mere personal courage, the requisites for enabling them to traverse hostile countries, to elude the pursuit of spies and of the police, and to inspire with confidence the inhabitants of the districts they wished to prepare for insurrection. They started after duly concerting all their plans, a few from Paris, the remainder from Avignon and the south of France. Few of them, to undertake this distant and dangerous journey of a thousand miles, were provided with more than fifty francs, or £2 each. They had not even passports in proper order; and no sooner had they started, than, through the indiscretion of their friends, the Russian government was prepared for their attempt. Nevertheless, they all succeeded, not only in reaching Poland, where they dispersed each to the portion allotted to him as the scene

of his labours, but in effecting their object, which was to dispose the population to take advantage of expected events; but these never occurring, it was not in the spirit of their plan, or of their instructions, to compromise the country by any partial rebellion. Some of their number however, isolated, tracked by their enemies, and rendered desperate, were induced to make appeals to the peasantry, and roused them to revolt.

These attempts were put down in detail, and the great majority of these daring adventurers perished on the scaffold, or were immured in dungeons; but the fate of some of them is full of such romantic interest as to be on that account worthy of recording, even if the storied memory of their gallant deeds, and of their fate, had not survived so vividly amongst the Polish people.

Joseph Zalivski himself, driven into Austrian Poland, was there captured and condemned to five-and-twenty years' incarceration, a punishment of which the reader can only duly appreciate the severity by referring to Silvio Pellico's account of his captivity.

So eminent had been his services to the Polish cause, at the outbreak of the Polish revolution,

that whilst he lingers in the dungeons of the Spielberg, the emigrant Poles have adopted, and support out of their slender means, his wife and children.

Volovitch, with a band of 17 partisans, was surrounded in a forest by 3,000 Russian troops, who furthermore forcedly employed an equal number of peasantry to beat the woods, though this duty they performed unwillingly, and with negligence. For several days he fought his way with his followers from tree to tree, being only captured when exhausted with cold and hunger, and after killing two hundred of the enemy. Volovitch was hanged.

Djevitski had always carried poison about him, which he swallowed when taken by the Russians. Mastering the pain which it occasioned, he died preaching, in every interval of agony, sedition to those surrounding him. He boasted that it was beyond the power of his captors to fetter his mind or speech. When the order was given to gag him, he was already dead.

Zawiszca, or Zavisha, was also hanged. He was surnamed The Black, from the colour of the shield and armour of his ancestors, whose name had become proverbial for fidelity and valour; since

it was commonly said that a man *was as true as a Zavisha.* He was only captured after killing seven men with his own hand. When led out to execution, he boldly mounted the scaffold, and, detaching his neckerchief, asked of the crowd who would undertake to give it his mother. None dared reply, till a Russian officer took hold of it. Zavisha snatched it from him with indignation, and hereupon a priest stepped forward to receive it.

Vinitski, who in the revolution had distinguished himself as captain of artillery,—a man at all times of enterprising rashness, — when driven to desperation, excited the admiration of the peasantry by some extraordinary efforts of the most daring nature, of which the following anecdote may serve to convey some idea to the reader.

He was once so closely pursued in the environs of Kalish, by the agents of Zobolef the governor, that he was forced to seek refuge in the city itself, which he could neither remain in, nor quit without a passport, which, in his circumstance, it appeared impossible to obtain. There was not a single house into which he could safely enter, and he therefore formed the singular resolution of going direct to the governor. Personating a spy anxious to give information, he obtained easy admission to

that fuctionary. "Whom have I the pleasure of addressing?" said the governor politely.—"Vinitski," replied his visitor.—"Vinitski!" echoed the governor in astonishment.—"Yes, the proscribed on whose head you have set a price. I have come to demand of you to fill me up a pass; and in return, I will give you an act of amnesty, which will save you by and bye from being hanged as you deserve."—Here Vitinski drew from his bosom a pistol, which he pointed at the trembling governor's head, till his passport was signed; and when he had obtained it, he would not depart till he had written and appended his signature to an act of amnesty. He then wished Zobolef good morning. If the governor had been a civilian, he would probably have called to his servants; as it was, he sent the *du-journe*, or officer on duty, to overtake the fugitive. Vinitski, who, had a cocked pistol under his cloak, stopped, and coolly faced the officer. —"You are mistaken; I have indeed just left the governor's, but I am not the man you seek; I hold a pass signed by him." This the governor had forgotten to mention in his agitation; and the officer was induced to turn down in an opposite direction. Vinitski gained the gates, and passed the posts, before a counter-order had reached them.

On another occasion, all his followers having been killed or dispersed, he was driven to take refuge in the forest of Vidava. Being traced thither, a captain of gendarmerie, with a body of Cossacs, was dispatched in pursuit of him. The captain was travelling the first stages in a britschka, taken from a country seat. His Cossacs arrested by the road side a peasant, whom they interrogated. It appeared that he was a native of the hamlet, in the forest where they hoped to apprehend Vinitski; he had been to seek work in the neighbourhood, and was returning home disappointed. As it was thought he might prove useful as a guide, he was told to mount the box of the britschka. Towards nightfall, the party reached an inn, where halt was made for the night; the peasant was duly questioned. When the officers sat down to supper, he pulled out his piece of black bread, asked for a farthing's worth of brandy, and having eaten his meal, went to the stable to sleep. The captain had retired to bed early; towards midnight he was awakened by some one tapping against his window-shutters, and started up in alarm. "It is I, Vinitski," said a voice from without; "I am come to wish you good-night—to thank you for the lift you gave me on your britschka. I have

borrowed your led-horse; I am sorry to deprive you of him, but really you have all pursued me so hotly that I am too much exhausted to go on foot. —Good-night." The clattering of a horse's hoofs resounded; the captain alarmed the Cossacs, who were soon in pursuit, but Vinitski had escaped again.

The author is ignorant of the exact circumstances of his capture, which took place in the environs of Kalish, to which city he was led.

Being condemned to be shot, when led out to execution he turned to the ready-dug grave, which was half filled with the rain-water, and of which the side had fallen in, and spitting into it (an oriental mark of contempt) said,—"Wretched barbarians, who know not even how to dig a grave!" This was perhaps in imitation of the saying of Pestel, hanged in 1826, on the glacis of the fortress of St. Petersburg, who, when the rope broke, and that he fell from the gallows, exclaimed, "Wretched country, where they know not even how to hang a man!

Having then turned to the priest accompanying him, he asked him for his blessing; but the priest, in a fit of enthusiasm, fell upon his knees, crying out,—"No, it is I who crave your blessing, as that

of a holy martyr for your country and your faith!" This scene, of which the effect may be imagined, was speedily put a stop to. Vinitski was shot, the priest apprehended within half an hour, and almost immediately dispatched as a soldier to the Caucasus.

Of those who escaped, amongst whom were Konarski, the two Zaleskis, the Potockis, and Lubinski, the story of the latter was the most remarkable.

The palatinate of Lublin had been allotted to him as the scene of his exertions; he was driven at length across the Austrian frontier, where he was captured, and recognised on account of the description published of his person, which was rendered peculiarly remarkable by the traces of a musket-ball which he had received through the cheek at the battle of Grochow, in the war of independence.

Aware of the slowness of all legal procedure in Austria, he with great presence of mind denied his identity. Having procured a piece of packthread, he kept it bound round his right hand, till by the day of his examination he had lost the use of it.

He pleaded this lameness as a proof that he could not be the Count Lubinski alluded to, and

when the bullet mark in his cheek was adduced, he denied its being a shot mark, saying, "If the trace of a bullet, which is the corresponding hole it has come out?" When he received the wound, the ball had come out in the mouth. After a detention of three years, he was liberated for want of proof. The fate of Mademoiselle Kavecka should not be forgotten, who for furnishing food to some of Lubinski's partisans in the palatinate of Lublin, was siezed, tried, and hanged.

The Russians endeavonr to palliate this barbarity by the assertion that she had also supplied them with ammunition; that the Polish women were the most difficult enemies they had to contend with,—by referring to the numerous instances of women fighting in the ranks of the insurgents, and in particular to that of the Countess Emilia Plater, who during the Polish revolution, about a year and half before, raised a band of partisans in Lithuania, and acting as their colonel, died in arms at the age of 26,—some say of her wounds, others of fatigue, on the 23rd of December, 1831, surrounded by her followers, in a wretched hut in the midst of the forest of Bialowicz. "She was mysteriously buried," says Ostrowski, "on account of the presence of the Russians in the neighbourhood. Her

grave was at first only marked by a plain wooden cross, and sometime after by a white stone, with the inscription of 'Emilia'."

Mitzkiavitch has recorded this romantic episode in a brief poem, called

THE DEATH OF THE COLONEL.

THE sentry is watching without the door, within the colonel is dying. Groups of peasants have gathered from the environs. This must be some renowned or powerful leader, whose fate the people seem to mourn so bitterly—and about whose wounds they inquire with such anxiety.

"Let my steed be saddled once more—my steed which has shared the glories of so many fields, once more let me see my steed before I die!—Bring it hither into my room, by my bedside, give me my martial trappings, my sword, my girdle, and my cartridges. Veteran as I am, I will die as Tsharnetski (Czarnecki) died, gazing on my arms!"

And when the charger was led away by the weeping bystanders, then the priest entered with the bread of angels. The soldiers' cheeks blanch at this sight, and the people pray on bended knee beyond the threshold. Even the old scythe-men of Kosciusko's time, after having from the hearts of their enemies, and from their

own veins, shed so much blood without a tear—even they now weep, as they recite the prayers of the Viaticum.

The dawn hears the chapel bell toll for the departed; the soldiers are all gone, for the Moskal (Muscovite) is in the neighbourhood. The people in flocks contemplate the remains of the dead warrior, stretched on a wicker mat; there is a crucifix in his hands, his head reclines upon his saddle covered with the *bourka;* his fire-arms and his sword are by his side.

But how comes it that this warlike leader, in his martial trappings, has a cheek like that of a young virgin, and a bosom so femininely rounded? Now save us, heaven! it is a virgin!—a Lithuanian,—the Colonel of the insurgents, Emilia Plater!

If any extenuation of such an act could be found in the patriotic enthusiasm of the Polish women, the Russians would have no difficulty in proving it from the evidence of all parties and shades of opinion. Not only the muse of Mitzkiavitch, but even the cold, stern, historic pen of the republican Lelewel, pays this tribute to his countrywomen. He says in his history of Poland:—

Passing in review the different classes of the Polish nation, I cannot refrain from consecrating a few lines to the Polish ladies.

Has it not been under their guidance that the first germ of patriotic feeling has become developed in the youthful generation, in which its country's hopes now centre. During the last outbreak, their patriotism was not confined within their own maternal bosoms;—they offered up on the altar of their country all that was dearest to them: they sent their sons, their husbands, their betrothed, to battle; parting from them with masculine firmness and with admirable resignation. They were seen in the hospitals tending the wounded soldiers, or those affected with contagious maladies, or fighting in the field beside their brothers. Arms were not too heavy for their tender hands, the dangers and fatigues of war did not suffice to daunt their courage.

One of the most beautiful of the odes of Mitzkiavitch is addressed to the Polish Mother; so universally is the political influence of women recognised amongst his countrymen.

ODE.

Oh, Polish mother! when the light of genius beams from thy son's eyes,—when his young brow is illumined by thoughts of antique virtue and ancestral pride—when quitting his childish games and young companions, he seeks out some old veteran, who sings him patriotic songs; or when he listens thoughtfully to the record of

his forefather's death,— oh! Polish mother, then preserve thy child from such a fearful pastime.

Cast thyself rather on thy knees before our Ladye of the many sorrows, and contemplate the sword wherewith her bosom is pierced; for destiny has in store for thee a fate more cruel.

Yes! whilst the world is fated to progress, to flourish in a vast union of nations, dogmas, and opinions, thy son will be called to combats without glory—to a martyrdom without hope of resurrection!

No! sooner teach him to meditate in solitary caves, stretched upon straw, where he may learn to inhale a chill and mouldy atmosphere, and with the reptile share his couch. There let him learn how to dissimulate his anger and his joy, to make his thoughts an unfathomable gulf, to render his words mysterious and fatal as a pestilence, and to compose his whole demeanour into the cold humility of the slimy snake. The Saviour amongst the children of Nazareth, it is said, already bore the cross on which he was to save the world. Oh, Polish mother! why not then amuse thy child with symbols of his future fate?

Let his hands grow familiar with the chain, let him learn to draw the convict's barrow. Let not his cheek grow pale when he looks upon the headsman's axe, nor redden at the sight of the degrading rope. For it is not his destiny to go like his forefathers to plant his victorious banner on Solyma's walls; nor like the soldiers of the

tricolor, to plough the furrows of the field of freedom, and to water it with his blood.

Some hidden spy will bid him defiance, he will have to do battle with a perjured tribunal. The lists will be a dungeon, and a merciless enemy the umpire and the judge.

Vanquished, the withered gallows-tree will be his monument. His glory and his immortality the short-lived tears of a woman and the nocturnal whisperings of his countrymen!

In 1835, two Polish associations, the one under the title of "Young Europe," the other of "Carbonari," sent their delegates to confer in Paris on the urgency of dispatching agents to different parts of Poland, for the purpose of organising and turning to every possible advantage for the national cause, the popular feeling against Russian rule. These delegates chanced to be Konarski and the two brothers Zaleski. All three had taken part in the last attempt; and notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties they had encountered in the previous expedition, as soon as it was determined that agents should be sent to open a communication with the disaffected in their native country, all three unhesitatingly volunteered on this service.

Konarski, a Protestant gentlemen, was an ensign before the Polish revolution; the elder Zaleski had held a higher military rank, and his younger brother, a student, had only taken arms during the revolution.

They reached Poland again in safety, and succeeded in their present purpose. Notwithstanding the price set upon their heads, they were enabled, by the devotion and fidelity of the inhabitants, to peregrinate from one part of the country to another, during a whole twelvemonth. At the expiration of this period, Adolphe, the younger of the Zaleskis, lost the use of his limbs, through rheumatism in the joints, arising from exposure to the cold; he was entrusted to the care of a Jew, who conveyed him across the frontier, and through Germany, without a passport, to the banks of the Rhine, concealed in a bale of goods on his waggon. His elder brother was shortly after obliged to take refuge in Austria, where he was taken and condemned to five-and-twenty years' incarceration, and to exposure in the pillory. Opening his veins with a piece of broken glass, he was found dead in his prison.

Konarski was not taken till 1839, upwards of four years after he had entered the country, and

commenced the exertions in which he never slackened, in favour of the national cause. His capture was effected at Oszmiana, the borough in which so fearful and indiscriminate a massacre was effected during the Polish war, by the Russian generals, who let loose upon this place the Mahomedan regiment, composed of Turkomen freebooters and Caucasian renegades. He had been denounced by a German named Frankenthal, who overheard his conversation with a clock maker.

He was conveyed to Wilna. Prince Troubetskoi, the governor of that place, (a relative of the cowardly Troubetskoi named Dictator in Pestel's conspiracy, still kept in exile by the emperor,) at the interrogation which ensued had the baseness to approach and box the ears of his prisoner, who was heavily ironed. The retribution was such as to satisfy all ideas of poetical justice. Konarski had strength enough to heave up and strike with his ponderous chains the shameless assailant, who staggered beneath the blow, which at first was not considered serious, but of the effects of which he died two years subsequently, when disgraced for malversation.

Konarski strenuously refused to betray any of

those with whom he had been in communication, though eight-hundred persons were arrested, and many of them confronted with him.

The greater part of what he endured, during his long incarceration, was never known; it was only ascertained, that when found to be mute under the lash, as a means of torture, he was fed on salt provision, and tempted in vain to speak in the fever of burning thirst, by liquids placed before him. The deprivation of sleep was resorted to. When he had been constantly wakened up in his slumbers, burning sealing-wax was dropped on to his flesh. When all attempts had failed, and that he was reduced to such a feeble and emaciated condition, that his life became daily precarious, judgment was passed upon him, and he was condemned to death. As soon as his sentence had been pronounced, he turned to his judges, and extending out his hands, burned to the quick; in an affecting speech, which brought the tears into the eyes of many of the bronzed officials, forgave them for all their cruelty towards himself, and prayed for his enemies.

So profound was the impression which Konarski's behaviour produced, even on the Russians, that two officers successively refused to shoot him, and from that time disappeared. His death was in this

respect remarkable, that of all the Polish victims, his fate alone elicited the sympathies of the Russians, partly, perhaps, through its being so widely bruited, and partly because of its having taken place beneath the eyes of those in whom the tendency to assimilate in feeling with the Poles had already made some progress. The Russian officers secretly purchased his fetters, which were converted into rings, and worn by a secret society, discovered shortly afterwards, inwhich the subalterns of a whole division of the army were compromised. Up to this moment, there are several officers of the imperial guard, who reasure up and show with mysterious precaution, the author has witnessed small rings of iron, said to be derived from the same source, and which they regard with all the awe which relics still more equivocal frequently inspire.

The survivor, Adolphe Zaleski, relates some singular facts connected with his sojourn, under such circumstances, in his native country. Having taken an active part, both in the revolution and the expedition of 1833, few could be better qualified to judge of the present state of feeling of any class, by contrasting it with the past. In 1836, he found himself on many occasions so closely pressed, that he was frequently obliged to make an appeal to

the feelings and traditions of the Cossacs, who perform the service of gendarmerie for the Russians; and this appeal he never knew to fail, when these men had spent some time in the country. On reminding them how the glory and independence of their people have been, identified in their connection with Poland,—a fact to which all their ballads and songs bear testimony,—on recalling their fraternity with the Poles, and the contrast afforded by their past and present condition, he found that he could always readily mollify the fiercest of these men, and not unfrequently make them weep like children. In one instance, having fallen in with a party of them, they avowed to him that they were taking one road because they knew some of the insurgents, with whom they would not interfere, to be upon another. Once he was fiercely detained by a rugged old warrior, who, after half an hour's conversation, wiped a rude tear from his eyes as he spoke of his wife and children, so many thousand versts away, whom he had not seen for so long a period, and despaired of ever again embracing. He ended with a curse on the Tsar, bidding his prisoner go at large, bearing with him his best wishes.

As to the devotion of the Polish population, it

may suffice, as regards the peasantry, to state, that no single instance is recorded of their betraying any of the insurgents. Of the feelings of the higher orders, the following amongst many instances, may be taken as a fair specimen. He was concealed in a country-seat; towards evening, he usually emerged to breathe the fresh air, and he was surprised to find one of the three daughters of his host returning from a moonlight walk. After jesting with her on this subject, he subsequently met in the same manner the second and the third sister; and pressing the latter for an explanation, he found that every night during his stay beneath their father's roof, without acquainting the family with their purpose, they had kept watch round the house, relieving each other, to guard him from all surprise.

As regards the Emigration, he gives the following anecdote.—An individual who could speak little else than Polish, and who, though of tried bravery and devotion, was utterly unacquainted with the designs of the insurgents, who used him only as a blind instrument, being dispatched by one of the Polish committee, to join their agent, unhesitatingly abandoned a small property which he had purchased in the south of France, and

attempted to traverse Germany, for the mere purpose of delivering into the hand of the man to whom he was sent, a card, covered with instructions in cypher; which, as far as he could comprehend, appeared only a series of the most trivial common-places. Though ignorant of German, and far from being distinguished for his quickness, after many months of the strangest adventures, he succeeded in crossing the Polish frontier. When long since given up, he traced to his hiding place the personage to whom he was sent, and delivered his credentials, making only the simple observation that he really could not for his part, conceive the use of taking so much pains to convey a thing so unimportant. On being informed that he must immediately return with the answer, he observed that he had come many miles, and begged with the utmost simplicity for a couple of hour's repose, before he set out to retrace his steps; having imagined that he was literally expected to do so on the spot.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REPUBLIC OF CRACOW.

Its establishment—Past and Present Condition—Occupation by the Troops of the Protecting Powers—The Spy Pawlofski—The real circumstances of his Death.

When the last partition of Poland took place, Russia, Prussia, and Austria having divided amongst them twenty millions of its population, generously guaranteed the independence of the remainder—about a hundred and thirty thousand,—at the Congress of Vienna, by establishing the free republic of Cracow in 1815. This petty state, consisting of the city of that name, with its surrounding territory, situated at the foot of the Carpathian mountains, and containing the tombs of King John Sobieski, Kosciusko, and Poniatowski, is all that now remains of Poland wearing even a semblance of nationality or independence.

Prince Adam Czartoryski, then the friend and

confidant of the Emperor Alexander, prepared for this miniature republic a liberal constitution ; but the three protective courts, under various pretexts, soon rendered it a dead letter.

Let us cite what Marmier, who gathered his information on the spot, in 1842, says upon this subject.

"The commission (appointed by the three powers, to see the constitution put in force) spent three years in its task, and at the end of it the chamber of representatives found itself dispossessed of the right of investigating the conduct of the senate, without obtaining the consent of the senate thereunto ;—deprived of the power of discussing the question of supplies, or of impeaching any public functionaries.

"The article relative to free trade was partly omitted, partly evaded. Cracow no longer enjoyed the franchise accorded to its home produce (by the treaty of Vienna,) and oppressive duties were placed on all articles which the city imported from Austria.

"The university, endowed by the munificence of the Polish kings with property to the amount of £200,000 per annum, was deprived of the greatest part of its wealth. The Russian and Austrian

governments forbade their subjects to study in its university.

"In 1828 the legislative assembly having refused the candidate for the presidency protected by the three powers, their resident commissioners annulled the election; and suspending the deliberations of the diet, vested all the powers of the state in the hands of the senate, till it should have made such changes in the national institutions as experience pointed out to be expedient.

"In 1833, its constitution was again remodelled so that nothing but its former skeleton remained. And in 1836, the three residents declaring that the city had become a place of refuge for democrats affiliated to secret societies, from which it was neccessary to clear it, its territory was suddenly invaded by the Austrian troops, who entering the houses of the citizens, occupied them as if it had been an enemy's country.

"A permanent militia, composed of Austrians, was organised in the city, and an Austrian commissary named director of police. Then followed the false denunciations, and the inquisition of these sbirri. The whole state was submitted to an incessant and terrific system of espionage. Each day the

privacy of its citizens is violated, they are incarcerated or condemned to exile.

"The judges of the tribunals are dispossessed, to make way for others more complaisant, and torture is used as a means of persuasion at the interrogatories.

"It would be in vain that one would now seek for any traces of the constitution, promulgated by these sovereigns and sanctioned by a European congress. It is crushed, buried, and if it survives in a few paragraphs, these are an empty formula, which the residents of Russia, Austria, and Prussia use as a veil to give an appearance of legality to their arbitrary acts. The republic of Cracow is now quite submissive to the will of these three ministers. The legislative and judicial powers, the armed force, the finances and police—all are in their absolute dependence; and woe to the hapless citizen who dares to raise his voice against this shameful violation of a solemn compact.

"These inflexible diplomatists can reduce him to silence a thousand ways, and make him repent of his temerity. If a public functionary, he is immediately dismissed. If a trader, he is stopped in all his speculations by a thousand vexatious formalities. If a proprietor, he is more highly

taxed, and a passport is refused him even to go from the city to his country house. Have we not seen the house of a citizen who dared to protest against the illegal incarceration of a student, broken into, plundered, and devastated by a troop of Russians, and occupied for four months after by the military? Have we not seen an Austrian general burst open the doors of the public prison, and take out of it for the purpose of punishing, a prisoner just shut up by the authorities for insulting a centinel?

"The palace of the Piasts and Jagellons is now an Austrian barrack. The university, one of the most ancient, and not many years ago one of the richest in Europe, can now scarcely boast of seventy students. The city of Cracow, whose population formerly amounted to a hundred thousand, now hardly numbers more than thirty!"

Such is the nature of the illusory independence of the republic of Cracow, the early cradle,—and strangely enough, the last ostensible relic of Polish nationality. All that its citizens ask, is that England and France, if they will not protect the constitution which they guaranteed, should at least send each a diplomatic agent, whose presence would keep in check the three commissioners, whose tyranny

can only be compared to that of the Venetian podestas.

The chief ostensible pretext for the occupation of the territories of the republic by the troops of the protecting powers, was the murder, by the inhabitants, of a Russian spy, whose corpse was found on the high road without the city.

The death of Pawlofski, for such was his name, though in its manner repugnant to English feeling, was at once a retribution full of justice, and an act of self-defence.

After the discovery of his body, on searching the apartment he had occupied, the authorities of Cracow found many papers addressed to the Russian officials, in several of which he complained of the inefficiency of certain of his fellow-spies. It was ascertained that on quitting his lodging, he had left word that if any body called for him, he had gone to the place of rendezvous. It was hence concluded by the public, that he had fallen a victim to the jealousy or vengenace of his colleagues. This was, however, not the case; he met with his death at the hands of a refugee from the kingdon of Poland, who has related to the author all the circumstances of this transaction, as nearly as he can remember, in the following words.

"Pawlofski was one of the most dangerous of the Russian agents. United to considerable tact, he possessed a degree of effrontery and assurance, which appears to have produced an effect on my countrymen, which I was far from experiencing. For my own part, he inspired me from the first, with an instinctive feeling of aversion and mistrust.

"I first met him on my arrival in London, in 1834, at the house of an old friend and companion-in-arms, who appeared to repose in him an unlimited confidence, which I was far from sharing. He then attached himself so pertinaciously to me, that I was obliged to be guilty of positive rudeness, to rid myself of his company and of his inquisitive importunities.

"Some time subsequently, in Paris, I received intelligence from the national committee, that he was about to proceed as an agent for the emigration to the kingdom of Poland; and this was accompanied by a request that I would furnish him with the proper signals or credentials to such persons as could facilitate his entrance to the country, his egress, from it, or his concealment; and the means of travelling safely through it. I declined acceding to this demand, being unwilling to entrust

the safety of so many personages to any man of whose sincerity or discretion I knew so little. Other of my fellow-refugees were, however, less cautious than myself, and furnished him with such recommendations as they could provide, not only in Poland, but in Germany, to facilitate his passage through that country.

He had no sooner reached the capital of Saxony, than he repaired to the house of a professor, to whom he had been addressed,—an enthusiastic liberal, who, he was informed, had on many occasions rendered important services to the Polish refugees. The professor who had recently been alarmed by some investigations set on foot, was however, little disposed to incur any risk, till his visitor found means nf working on his feelings, by representing himself as an exiled son called to his native country to attend the bed-side of a dying father, and unable to proceed further, unless the professor would use his influeuce to procure a false passport for him. The good, easy man was overcome by his pathetic story, and bursting into tears, threw his arms round Pawlofski's neck, exclaiming —"Oh! my brother, I will sooner run t risk of misfortune than see you any longer so unhappy!"

"In Saxony, as all over Germany, you know that

there exists a party affecting the most exalted liberalism of opinion, and comprising nearly all men of scientific pursuits, or literary acquirements, who have not been brought over by a place, pension, or some coloured *adler-ordnung mit eine schleife* (an order with the privilege of wearing the ribbon in a bow). When polticial storms are raging in neighbouring countries, whilst the revolution of July was still recent, Poland unconquered, or the Belgic question unsettled, this party took courage to pass resolutions at private meetings, over their bottles, of which the rashness filled them with awe on the ensuing morning; but at the same time they extended very seasonable aid to such foreign refugees as passed through their cities, and in this respect, we Poles have much to thank them for. Directly, however, despotic governments gained strength, their own princes, partly through the representations of the spoilers of Poland, and partly prompted by their own instincts, began to tighten the rein; and as it therefore became a matter of some danger to connive at our passage, we found very little aid amongst those, who had formerly given us so much assistance. It was hence with great difficulty that in the midst of his own misgivings, the kind-hearted professor succeeded in persuading some of his friends to procure

for Pawlofski the means of proceeding to his native country. No sooner had these been obtained, than the traitor denounced them to the Russian minister, who pointing out all concerned in the business to the court of Saxony, demanded their punishment.

"They were all arrested; the professor ruined as well as his family, was still imprisoned several years afterwards. Pawlofski, before his treachery could get wind, then traversed Prussia, profiting in a like manner by the recommendations given him, to convict those guilty of favouring the Poles. In consideration of his services, he received an order from the king of Prussia, and another, with the rank of major, from the emperor of Russia. Proceeding to the *republic* of Cracow, he hastened to make the best use of his credentials from the emigration, for the purpose of discovering the retreat of such refugees as were concealed in that city, and of tempting as many as he could of the natives of the neighbouring territories of Austrian and Russian Poland, to compromise themselves, by engaging to join in a proximate insurrection, which he represented himself as sent to announce. The part he was playing was therefore not only that of the blood-hound, but of what in the French police was formerly called *agent provocateur*; that is to say,

the man who tempts victims to do that which he denounces when done at his own instigation.

"It happened that at this time I had myself taken refuge in the city of Cracow. A price had been set upon my head by the Russians; and if discovered, the nominal republic had no choice but to give me up.

"I had just been made acquainted with Pawlofski's treachery, when I recognised him seated at table in the inn where I was living, and of which the host, a freemason, was devoted to me.

"I made no observation on the subject; but a few minutes after, the inn-keeper returned as pale as death, and informed me that the stranger had named me by my real name, saying I had nothing to fear from him.

"After re-assuring him, and reflecting on what was best to be done, I desired to be led straight into the presence of the new guest.

"Pawlofski had been shown into a room, where he had come by appointment to meet several men, more or less compromised; he changed countenance on seeing me advance towards him, but on my angrily denouncing his infamy to the company, he replied with so much assurance that several of those present were staggered. We were interrupted, and

obliged to separate, in the midst of his protestations of innocence. Satisfied with having unmasked him, and thus deprived him of his chief power of doing injury, I at first regarded his presence in Cracow, merely as a peril which known might be avoided; but on making subsequent inquiry, I discovered, that as an agent of the emigration, he had seduced a large number of families into a conspiracy, with the object of denouncing them to the vengeance of the Russian government.

"Whilst I was regretting that we had not ensured their safety, by putting him to death, his inconceivable assurance placed him in our power. Imagining from the fact of my having let him escape so easily the first time, that I was not quite certain of his treachery, he fancied that he could still impose upon me, or at least upon my companions; and he determined not to draw close the net till he had amply filled it. Relating himself my denunciation of him, he lamented that I should be of a temper so hasty and suspicious, repulsed my accusation as an odious calumny of which I was the dupe and he the victim, and requesting an interview, declared that he could clear up every allegation made against him. The proofs of his infamy were, however, of a nature which he little suspected, and the extent of the

mischief he meditated was so appalling, that having unanimously condemned him, it was resolved that at any cost he must die.

"Filled as Cracow was by Russian and Austrian spies and agents, and utterly at their beck and call as the authorities of the republic were, it appeared probable that whoever should attempt to carry the sentence of this new Wehmgericht into execution, could only do so at the sacrifice of his life. I was then disappointed and desperate. I had lost, as you know, eighteen of my relatives, and amongst them those nearest and dearest to me,—in the field, or on the scaffold, against the Russians; and I had just volunteered for this sanguinary office, when I received a message from Pawlofski, urgently requesting an interview in a spot at some distance without the walls of the city.

"I was at the same time made acquainted, through a channel which he could never suspect would be open to me, that mistrusting his persuasive powers, he had laid a snare to arrest me in this solitary place, where he could keep the circumstance concealed for a few days, so as not to scare the remainder of his anticipated victims. If I had not been already chosen as the instrument to punish his perfidy, this singular fact would have appeared

to point me out as the most fitting individual to measure out to him the meed of retribution. I resolved to waylay him, and confess that this circumstance gave a dramatic interest to the deed I was about to undertake, which cancelled much of the horror I should have felt as the mere executioner of a sentence.

"I chose ————, my relative, to aid me in my enterprise. Habiting him in the costume of a driver who plied for hire, I procured a sledge and horses. Stationed for several hours before Pawlofski's door, at the moment he appeared the sledge was to move slowly on, and I trusted that he would unsuspectingly hire it. I feared that if he took another the driver would interfere to save him; but against this there was no remedy. For my own part, I proceeded along the road, armed only with a dagger,—for I would not trust to fire-arms. At a considerable distance from the place of rendezvous, where his measures had been taken to entrap me, I sat down on the snow, and concealed myself in a ditch overshadowed by the boughs of some fir trees. I never wavered in my resolution. I considered the deed I was about to commit not only justifiable, but meritorious. My only apprehension was that I should not spring suddenly enough upon

him,—that he might shoot me before I could drag him from his sledge, or that he might have taken a strange coachman, who would interfere in time to stay my arm. My dread was that he would escape my dagger; for I thought of the ruin and desolation his denunciation would draw upon so many families.

"At length the sledge approached:—I sprang from my hiding place,—I dragged him from his seat,—we rolled together in the snow,—he seized me by the hair; and as I plunged my weapon repeatedly into his body till he was dead, he tore out a handful of itr by the roots.

"Meanwhile the driver, who was my relative, looked on. I searched the body, and took from it the papers, leaving the arms of the dead man, and his money by his side. Then dragging the corpse out into the middle of the road, that all might see that it was not the deed of a robber, I took his place in the sledge, and was driven back to the city. Though the sledge and horses were noticed at the gate, and known, this circumstance furnished no clue in the subsequent investigation which followed, because the driver had gone out with one passenger, and apparently returned with the same."

With the death of Pawlofski ceased all dange of his revelations; for he had been too jealous t entrust his discoveries to any of his colleagues.

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